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FOX NEWS? BRING IT ON.

The annoying thing is, its people don't listen. The same shouldn't be said about us.

IN OUR HOUSEHOLD, one of the most regular sources of information about the U.S. election campaign isn't a news show at all. Most weeknights, my wife and I tune in at 11 p.m. to *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*. It's a smart, smartass, fast-moving and very much to-the-minute comic look at the day's news: one of its great virtues is that it makes a point of declaring itself to be nothing more than a spoof of traditional news shows. With that premise established, it then succeeds at a much higher level, because it brilliantly synthesizes the silliness and pomposity inherent in political sound bites, and reflects what ordinary people are thinking when they see those clips on the nightly news.

All of which is to say that *The Daily Show* provides a perfect counterpoint in the U.S. to the Fox News Channel: the former says it isn't a news program while doing quite a good job of being one, while the network that claims it is a "fair and balanced" news outlet actually isn't. *The Daily Show* and Fox are both primarily about entertainment, while Fox's only apparent other goal is to absolutely always portray George W. Bush's administration in the best light possible. In that regard, Fox News is the journalistic equivalent of the praetorian guard of Roman Empire days: it will do everything within its powers to protect the emperor, and to attack his enemies.

That has new relevance to Canadians because, as we note in our cover package (page 23), Fox News is seeking permission to have its signal made available in Canada. If the Fox application is successful, Canadian TV viewers will soon be exposed to something new: an all-news television channel that—aside from its Orwellian "fair and balanced" slogan—makes little pretense of being either.

In some ways, a declared bias in news reporting isn't a bad thing: it's preferable to news organizations that purport to be neutral, but aren't. Fox News, as journalist-turned-diplomat Pam Wallin notes, is the television equivalent of a newspaper or magazine column, as opposed to a news story: you're expected to understand that it has specific opinions and points of view, and that those are built into its coverage. That's fine in principle: some of the best, most thought-provoking journalism comes from people with very clearly developed and declared value sets—in the U.S., think of people like Christopher Hitchens, James Wolcott, Lewis Lapham, or (and I'm not kidding here) P.J. O'Rourke.

> **It's the journalistic equivalent of the praetorian guard: it will do everything in its powers to protect the emperor**

The problem with subjective journalism begins when biases win out over clear-eyed analysis: you should be able to admire people while admitting their flaws, just as you can be opposed to someone while admitting his or her strength. (Memo here to Liberal supporters of Paul Martin: it's *okay* to acknowledge that he had a really lousy election campaign.) The problem with Fox News—as with the Bush Republicans—is that every fact, every event has to be spun so that it appears to conform with their view of the world. Nonetheless, that shouldn't prevent the CRTC from giving Fox a place on our airwaves—the sooner, in fact, the better. The annoying thing about Fox News, after all, isn't as much the fact that its people have strong opinions, it's that they're so unwilling to listen to the other views. Would we really want the same thing said about ourselves?

Anthony Wilson-Smith

response@macleans.ca to comment on The Editor's Letter

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'The bottom line is that our health care system requires rewriting. We must learn to not only think outside the box, but learn from other countries.' —Caesar Squitti, Thunder Bay, Ont.

Health-care havoc

We have been bombarded by journalists, politicians and ordinary Canadians telling us about the inadequacies of our health care system ("Writing a new Rx," Politics, Sept. 6) I am of a different view. It's fine. Nurses and doctors are devoted to improving our health, hospitals have the latest equipment and drug companies are constantly turning out new products to combat diseases The problem lies with the people. How many of us eat terribly, fail to exercise, remain in high stress jobs and generally fail to take care of our health? In my case it was job stress, bagels and cream cheese and fried chicken, along with genetic factors, that led to a heart attack—a tremendous user of medical resources If we were to take better care of ourselves, the load on the medical system would be reduced

John Whitaker, Guelph, Ont

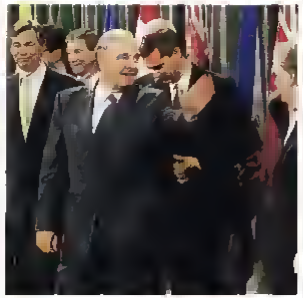
The leaders of our country have just spent a few days at the First Ministers' meeting being coddled, fawned over and generally pampered, while they argue how much money they are going to dole out for our good health Why is it that we taxpayers appear to overlook the fact that all the money governments give us is our money that they have taken from us This would be bad enough, except they misuse, squander and generally waste much of it in the process

Roy Anderson, Mount Brydges, Ont

I would like to apologize for the disgraceful acts of our premier at the recent national health care summit. Ralph Klein, as our representative, has disgraced all of Alberta with his arrogance by walking out early I hope the rest of Canada does not see us all as red-neck morons

Dennis Goulden, Edmonton

I do hope the message that Ralph Klein is sending to Paul Martin is loud and clear Remember the hard-fought election at the end of June? Remember Martin accusing Klein of having a conspiracy with Stephen Harper? Remember all eyes falling on Klein as the villain who caused the election to fail for the



Most readers feel Martin fared well at the recent First Ministers' health-care meeting

Conservatives I do not blame Klein for short-changing the meeting with Martin and his fellow premiers. Why should he show any kind of support when Martin made a mockery of him, nationwide? Good on you, Ralph.

L. G. Anderson, Spruce Grove, Alta.

The meeting between the premiers and Paul Martin provides the best explanation of why we Canadians have given up on politics The show on the first day, when total nonentities pontificated, preached and offered inchoate ideas to each other was enough to make me dream of an absolute monarchy

Carlo Testa, Blandford, N.S.

No surprises

I'm not exactly sure why Anthony Wilson-Smith is so surprised that the majority of voters in the U.S. is ignoring the Republicans' mistakes and failings over the previous four years, while buying into the spin that electing Democrats would lead to chaos ("Rain, Republican-style," The Editor's Letter, Sept 20) Sure, we've made our mistakes, the Republicans say, but don't elect them, it'll only get worse That President George W Bush is the frontrunner right now shouldn't shock any Canadians The Liberals have been using the exact same strategy—and it works every time

> Because of Iraq, Bush is beatable and the election is the Democrats to lose—which is just what they are doing

Luc Lewandoski, Winnipeg

Anthony Wilson-Smith claims to be baffled by the U S presidential campaign and the Bush/Cheney lead in the polls But his column conveys frustration rather than bafflement Because of Iraq, Bush is beatable and the election is the Democrats to lose Which is just what they are proceeding to do

David Cottle, Niagara Falls, Ont.

Locals know best

How refreshing to read Stuart Hiscox's story about the CIDA-funded bakery project in Salvador, Brazil ("Listening to the locals," Foreign Aid, Sept 6) I am proud that Canada puts money into innovative programs that respect the needs and wishes of the locals Through projects like these we can most effectively fight terrorism, which is spawned in large measure by the despair caused by unrelenting starvation and disease. Imagine how much more we could accomplish if Canada honoured its long-standing pledge to increase its spending on foreign aid

Jane Plant, Courtenay, B.C

I would like to congratulate CIDA on its success in programs like the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives that allow foreign governments and organizations to direct funds to where they believe the money is most needed. However, Canada should not overlook the need for large, modern infrastructure when providing foreign aid. In fact, the World Bank has declared "Providing basic infrastructure services will help cut extreme poverty in half by 2015 by bolstering the number of children in primary schools, improving the living conditions of slum dwellers and enabling local businesses opportunities." We devote only nine per cent of our international aid to bricks and mortar programs that provide necessities like clean water and safe roads

Chris Newcomb, Chairman, International Committee, Association of Consulting Engineers of Canada, Vancouver

Replacing humanity

I think all this communications technology is killing real human contact and mak

TOM HANSON/CP

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Fixed image | When a single photo clears away the clutter

The daily news of global death and destruction threatens to desensitize us. But every so often, an image makes tragedy human again. "I saw your poignant photo of a Russian child, face etched with terror," wrote Lynn Crosby of Halifax. "It moved my mind from the general to the particular as I wondered what became of that child. What will become of us all?"



ing people less social ("A survival guide to gadget world," Cover, Sept 6) Everyone is so busy communicating with others on cell or Internet, but not face-to-face, that they have no time to get to really know what makes others tick.
Ravi Sharma, Calgary

My community has changed with the increased use of email and the Internet. The people I keep most in touch with now are those with whom I share specific interests, rather than those in whose proximity I live
Evelyn Jones, Saskatoon

I can spend hours at a time on my computer, shirking all responsibility, and the world seems new to me every time I finally get out again And sad as it may be, I know dozens of people who share this same addiction. Every spare moment is spent on the Internet, rather than on productive activity It's unhealthy.
Krystine Wawrzonek, Grande Prairie, Alta

Although I adore the Internet, email and the various forms of communication that technology has enabled, I find myself more and more content with my long-distance relationships (friendships, family, etc) and, therefore, spend less time than I would otherwise socializing and meeting people where I live In the past when I moved, I was forced to spend time meeting new people, but now it is much easier to maintain closeness with those back home rather than expand my social group here
Tracy Cassels, New York City

Low-tech praise

I want to express my appreciation for the recent essay by Lianne George about how one man's death went tragically unnoticed in Winnipeg for two years ("A high-tech ghost story," Sept 20) The originality of the topic and the ideas and insights that were raised about our high-tech world were thought provoking and refreshing. Kudos for a job well done
Scott Owen, Montreal

Irrelevant issues

In your Sept 20 issue, I read the brief article on the Canadian musician twins, Tegan and Sara Quin ("Twins who live far apart to make better music together," Music) What baffled me was why you specifically stated their sexual orientation Is it necessary for you to say they are lesbians? Next time when I'm reading Maclean's, should I look forward to an article on Paul Martin that states he is heterosexual?
Sarah Kim, Toronto

Scandals all around

I was surprised that your Sept 20 piece "Black's trap" on Conrad Black was under the section heading "Scandal." Yet, in the same issue, there is an article on WestJet's and Air Canada's corporate espionage efforts Entitled "Spies in the skies," it appears under the heading "Business." Seems to me you should have lengthened the Scandal section.
Jeffrey Swystun, Toronto

Keeping score

Paul Wells's article on Paul Martin and medicare was mean-spirited and revealed no insights ("Tomorrow, tomorrow...," The Back Page, Sept 20) Honestly, this sort of slightly cynical, jokey, put-down kind of journalism is neither funny nor clever; it is actually destructive What it does is denigrate the intelligence of the reader while trying to infect people with a supposedly clever, cynical, ironic perspective This is particularly sad when done in the context of politics Wells should instead use his creative and imaginative genius to look at what really ails Canada and propose some viable alternatives
Andrew Salkeld, Wakefield, Que

I am one of those few Canadians who does have faith in what Prime Minister Paul Martin says he will accomplish while holding the job as our PM, despite what critics like your columnist Paul Wells say This faith goes back to the days when Martin told the nation he would balance the books, and then did Back in June, Wells made a prognostication about Martin's chance to remain PM on June 28—and he was dead wrong
Ken Henderson, Kitchener, Ont

Paul Wells's latest rant against Paul Martin arrived in my home on the very day that the health care agreement between the federal government and the provinces/territories was announced. This continued misreading of the Prime Minister's political abilities demonstrates a strong journalistic bias Time for an objectivity check, Mr Wells
Bob Little, Dartmouth N S.



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MACLEAN'S BEHIND THE SCENES



ILLUSTRATION BY ALEKSANDAR SOTIROVSKI

A LABORIOUS LITMUS TEST

In choosing organizations to highlight for its upcoming Canada's Top 100 Employers issue, *Maclean's* got a taste of the rigorous analysis, peer comparison and even editorial hand-wringing that went into Mediacorp Inc.'s fifth annual publication of *Canada's Top 100 Employers*.

"We start with a pool of over 52,000 employers, from which we select the 6,000 fastest-growing companies and organizations," says Tony Meehan, publisher of *Canada's 100 Top Employers*. Detailed information is requested from each of these employers. "When you consider that we grade companies on seven wide-ranging criteria, add marks for good corporate citizenship, then weigh them against their respective industries, you can see how much thought goes into each selection."

But there are always subjective qualifiers, and even experts don't always agree on how to judge them. "It's difficult to grade one employer's perks over another's," says Richard Yerema, the book's author. Individual needs affect how each of us perceives these benefits. "That's where *Maclean's* coverage of Canada's Top 100 Employers really shines," says Yerema. "It has in-depth stories on innovative employers that make a difference for their employees—readers can decide what's important for themselves."

Maclean's editor-at-large Joanna Pachner agrees: "It's amazing the kind of perks employers are extending to make workers comfortable—movie screenings, nap rooms with alarm clocks, an industrial company even sponsors cooking classes." But, Pachner adds, "Canadians really want to read about companies that reach out past their employees—to their families and the communities in which they live."

Maclean's special issue on Canada's Top 100 Employers appears on newsstands the week of Oct. 4. The 2005 edition of *Canada's Top 100 Employers* will be released at bookstores across Canada at the same time.

Help shape what's inside *Maclean's* by registering as a member of the *Maclean's* Advisory Panel at *www.macleans.ca/ap*. For further information about this article, contact behindthescenes@macleans.ca.

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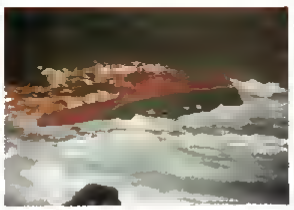
UPFRONT

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Tragedy | Death in Newfoundland's stormy waters

The sea has given much to Newfoundland, but it has also taken away. It did that again early last week when brothers David and Joseph Ryan died after their $1.7-million longliner, Ryan's Commander, sank in hurricane conditions near Cape Bonavista, 125 km north of St. John's.



After the shipwreck, five crew members were thrown from their lifeboat. Three were rescued in the tiny cove (top), but the Ryan brothers did not survive.

The Ryans and their four crew members managed to get on board a life raft. A Canadian Forces search-and-rescue helicopter then tried to save them from the 10-m swells, in a brave attempt in which one of the aircraft's crew members was almost lost. Lowered down to the raft by hoist, Cpl. Norm Penny found that four men didn't have survival suits, and managed to get the oldest of them up to safety. But when Penny descended again—with both the raft and the new Cormorant helicopter dangerously close to the jagged shoreline—the aircraft started jerking in the 100-km winds and the crew had no choice but to cut him loose.

By that time both of the helicopter's hoists were no longer working. The crew improvised, lowering a rescue basket down with a rope, and pulled Penny up on the third try. The remaining fishermen, meanwhile, had been spilled from the life raft close to shore. Three of them were eventually rescued, one from the water, two from the rocks they'd managed to climb onto.

The Ryans did not survive. In the brothers' hometown of St. Brendan's, the 180 residents struggled with the tragedy. Most were in church for Sunday evening mass when the bad news came. All of them lost something that night in the raging Atlantic waters.

Quote of the week | 'This is, I feel, the end of a long battle, and I hope it stays the end of the battle.' Plaintiff KIM VANCE of Musquodoboit Harbour, after Nova Scotia's Supreme Court made her province the fifth to allow gay marriage

ScoreCard

NELSON, B.C.
Community group plans to erect memorial to "courageous legacy" of U.S. draft dodgers who moved to Canada to escape Vietnam War. Enraged right-wing Americans vow to travel to city just to, er, spit on the bronze sculpture. Oh, well, a tourist is a tourist.

BEWITCHED
Canadians Laurie Schedler and Paul Rickards make Scottish history as first couple legally married in Wiccan ceremony. Bride and broom, oops, groom, called service at Edinburgh temple romantic and wonderful. Now face typical marital challenge of keeping magic alive.

MICHAEL CALCOTT
Treasury Board official's 1999 email trashed "incompetence" of ad firm Groupaction. Warning of "wretched" and "absurd" performance could have saved millions. Memo was bold, blunt and brutally frank—no wonder it was ignored by official Ottawa.

SARTECHS
Save four fishermen from wild ocean off Newfoundland. Another day at office for military's gutsy search and rescue techs. Elite training, high risk, low pay. No life like it.

ST. JOHN'S TELEGRAM/CP; ST. JOHN'S TELEGRAM/CP

Mansbridge on the Record



SPINNING TALES

The NHL labour dispute shows how well-tested lines define public debates

WATCHING GARY Bettman and Bob Goodenow makes me think about two tools often used by those caught in the public eye: spin and message track. Specifically, I've been thinking about how those two techniques have dominated so much of the national dialogue and at such a great cost. We see them in politics, in big business, but it hurts to see them so evident in the struggle between the two men who seem to control the fate of our favourite national sport.

The Canadian Oxford Dictionary defines "spin" this way: "a bias in information to give a favourable impression." For one who gets to question some of these figures who have been trained by professionals to spin, it's a fascinating experience. You almost always know before you start the interview that spin is coming, but if you're unsure, a first hint is when you see a certain glaze slip across your guest's eyes as he/she mentally prepares the "proper" answer with the right "key" phrases. They've been trained by a spin doctor to spit out a message track when a question approaches the controversial. And that message track is often based on any number of pieces of information that fall into what can be a huge gulf between truth and, to be kind, distortion.

Spin doctors often use polls and surveys to come up with the best possible track, or they use focus groups (in some cases, people literally enticed off the street for a few dollars) to determine which answers work and which don't. When one is in the midst of an interview with a politician trying to push a position, there are times when you can almost hear an actual click as the message track starts—the precise moment the brain's cassette of carefully prepared comments switches into the play mode.

> **Viewers are sophisticated. They sense spin as quickly as anyone else, and if my mail is any evidence, they don't like it.**

As an interviewer, one doesn't have to let the track go on forever, but beware. If one attempts to break the spin, the awkward game of interruption by the interviewer and "just let me finish" by the interviewee can follow. When that happens, it runs the risk of being simply too much for the viewers—they can switch off or blame both participants for an incoherent and inadequate explanation of the issue at hand. But viewers are sophisticated—they sense spin as quickly as anyone else, and if my mail is any evidence, they don't like it.

At times, my interviews last week with Bettman and Goodenow followed a similar script to sessions I've had with politicians. The two men who have to resolve this dispute, yet won't even talk to each other on the phone, kept trotting out their well-tested lines. Goodenow kept saying the "owners set player values" in trying to counter the widespread impression that the players are greedy. Bettman even admitted he was spending money on gauging public opinion on the league's position, which surely meant his "the league is running out of gas" line had gone the focus group route. He certainly used it enough.

Does any of this work anymore? I'm not so sure. I'm not naive: spin is not dead as a public relations art form, but it may be on life support as an effective tool. Journalists may still be falling for it, even when we say we're not. But the public, to whom it's actually directed, is increasingly not buying it, and I sense people are becoming disillusioned with those who use it, and those who allow it to be used. M

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To comment: letters@macleans.ca

FaceTime



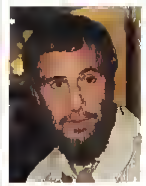
Great escape
Iraqi-born Fairuz Yamulky of Vancouver returned to her homeland in 2003 to help with the rebuilding. She ended up being abducted in northern Iraq in early September, and spending 16 days as a hostage. Her kidnappers demanded US$2.5 million, and threatened to behead her. But Yamulky, 38, convinced a guard she could help him come to Canada, and she was released. Her younger sister, who like most of the family lives in the Vancouver area, called her "a very tough chick."



Straight shooter
Mikhail Kalashnikov is best known as the creator of the famous Russian assault rifle (also known as the AK-47) that bears his name. Now he's come up with another namesake that packs a bang: 82-proof vodka. "I've always wanted to expand on the good name of my weapon by doing good things," he said. "So we decided to create a vodka." Cheers.



Tory time
Now that John Tory is the new leader of Ontario's Conservatives, he has to get into the legislature. That may be easy—Liberal sources have said they may let him run unopposed. But Tory, 50, a moderate, must also find a way to appease the party's right-wingers—who had a strong showing at the leadership convention—while he takes on Dalton McGuinty's Liberals.



Wild world
Take the peace train—home. Yusuf Islam, the artist formerly known as Cat Stevens, was denied entry into the United States and deported back to Britain, his home country. U.S. officials said Islam, who became a Muslim in 1977 and renounced pop music, is linked to groups believed to be connected to terrorism. Islam's website denied those allegations, and said he has always advocated peace through his music and extensive humanitarian relief work.

CALGARY SUN/CP (TOP); JOHN D. MCHUGH/AP; SUE REEVE/LONDON FREE PRESS/CP; TIM OCHENDON/PA PHOTO

WORLD

SUDAN In his first speech to the United Nations General Assembly, Prime Minister Paul Martin called for a stronger UN that could more effectively deal with humanitarian crises such as the current one in the Darfur region of Sudan. Martin said the Security Council has taken far too long debating the issue.

IRAQ President George W. Bush also appeared before the UN to defend the U.S. role in Iraq. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who spoke before, said the U.S. invasion had been illegal. But Bush claimed that Iraq is headed for stability and democracy.

News from Iraq contradicted the President. As violence continued between U.S. forces and insurgents, two American hostages, Eugene Armstrong and Jack Hensley, were beheaded. At week's end the fate of a third man abducted at the same time, Kenneth Bigley of Britain, remained in doubt, with the kidnappers threatening to kill him as well. All three were civil engineers.

INDONESIA Retired general Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono won the country's presidency, ousting Megawati Sukarnoputri. Among his challenges: fighting the homegrown terrorist network that has been held responsible for a number of blasts, including the 2002 Bali nightclub bombing that killed 202 people, most of them Australian tourists.



APPEAL In 1982, Robert Baltovich (top) was convicted of the murder of his girlfriend, Elizabeth Bain. Last week, he was back in court, appealing his conviction. His lawyers argued that the judge had been biased, and that Bain's sister had fabricated evidence. But the real bombshell was the unsealing of evidence alleging that Bain, who disappeared on June 19, 1990, and whose body has never been found, may have been murdered by notorious killer Paul Bernardo.

At the time, Bernardo was operating as the Scarborough Rapist, and getting increasingly violent. Baltovich's lawyers argued that Bain may well have been his first murder victim. The two had met once, they said, and sometimes frequented the same places; Bernardo often had sexual encounters in the park where Bain's car was last seen before she disappeared. And a pack of du Maurier Lights, Bernardo's favourite cigarettes, was found in her vehicle. The hearing continues this week.

THE DANTON CASE Katie Wolfmeyer, 19, was acquitted of charges that she helped former St. Louis Blues forward Mike Danton hire a hit man to murder his agent, David Frost. Wolfmeyer's defence argued that she had been "an unwitting participant" in the scheme. Danton, who last July pleaded guilty to conspiracy charges, is scheduled to be sentenced on Oct. 22.

UP IN SMOKE The U.S. government went to court seeking US$280 billion from the tobacco giants. Washington is arguing they've tried to get Americans addicted while knowing full well that smoking causes cancer.

TURKEY To further his country's quest for European Union membership, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan offered assurances that his Islamist government would not stray from Turkey's secular ideals. Erdogan's party recently withdrew a proposed package of penal code changes, saying that it wanted adultery to made an imprisonable offence. But the PM said the changes would go through without such an addition.

BY WES TYRELL



BY THE NUMBERS

AND THE WINNER WILL BE?

According to a Rogers Media poll, Canadians are hoping for *big* change in the Nov. 2 U.S. presidential election.

If you were eligible to vote for the U.S. president, who would you select?	%
Democratic candidate John Kerry	50
Republican candidate George W. Bush	21
Independent Ralph Nader	8

If elected, who would have the best relationship with Canada?	
Kerry	59
Bush	22

SOURCE: POLLARA INC. SAMPLE SIZE 1,270. MARGIN OF ERROR ± 2.8%

CANADA

UCC Former students testifying at the sex abuse trial of Douglas Brown, 55, described how the Upper Canada College teacher allegedly prowled the dorm at night. Three witnesses described once-only incidents of touching. But the fourth alleged more than one assault, and said Brown, who left UCC in 1993, had performed oral sex on him.

QUEBEC Bad news for Jean Charest's Liberals. They lost two by-election contests—one to the Parti Québécois, another to the Action démocratique du Québec. In two other ridings, the Liberals and the PQ held on to safe seats.

The ADQ's Mario Dumont, meanwhile, sounded a nationalistic note when he proclaimed Quebec should be an autonomous state within Canada. The other parties quickly lashed out at him: the Liberals said Quebec effectively has that status already, while the PQ called him an opportunist.



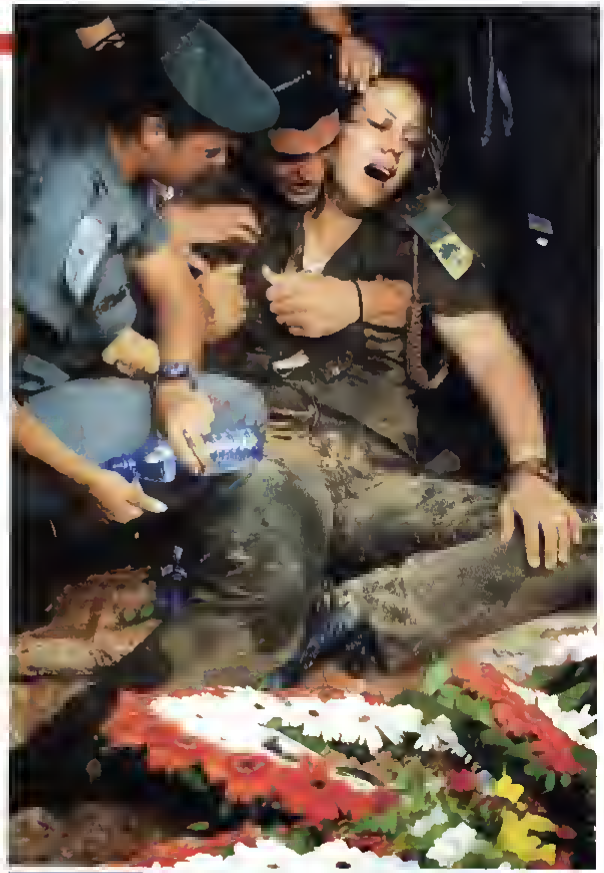
THE ARAR CASE The U.S. said it will not cooperate with the inquiry into the September 2002 deportation from New York City to Syria of Ottawa's Maher Arar. In a letter released last week, American authorities said they were right to deport Arar without Ottawa's consent.

HEALTH Ontario Health Minister George Smitherman vowed to stop Life Line Screening, a Cleveland company, from running one-day diagnostic clinics in the province, charging up to $200. The government rushed through legislation that would bar firms from taking money for insured services.

SALMON Dismally low numbers of salmon were showing up at their spawning grounds in B.C.'s Fraser River tributaries. Early counts showed up to 90 per cent of some stocks unaccounted for after passing a lower counting station. Officials suspect high water temperatures of killing fish, but legal and illegal net fishing may also have been a factor.

ROYALTY Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip will visit Saskatchewan and Alberta next May to take part in centenary celebrations in those two provinces.

OH, RATS! For a while Alberta, which touts itself as rat-free, wasn't, after an infestation of Norway rats stunned a normally quiet southeast Calgary neighbourhood. Locals used brooms, shovels and such to kill 24 of the rodents, and then called in city workers, who dealt with another 17. Officials suspected the animals may have been illegally bred as snake food, but then dumped. Alberta spends $250 million a year on rat control.



MIDDLE EAST The girlfriend of a slain border policeman collapsed during his funeral in Jerusalem. Cpl. Menashe Komemi was one of two Israelis killed by a teenaged female Palestinian suicide bomber at a bus-stop checkpoint, in an attack that ended seven relatively tranquil months in the city. Palestinian gunmen later killed three soldiers at an army outpost in the Gaza Strip before being killed themselves.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: ALEX UROSEVIC/TORONTO SUN/CP; TORONTO SUN/CP; PHIL SNELL/CP

JACQUES BOISSINOT/CP; KEVIN FRAYER/AP

Mary Janigan | ON THE ISSUES



DRAMA IN OTTAWA!

Striking bureaucrats, sulking mandarins—and uncertainty over what Martin wants to do

IT WAS AN exquisitely delicate dance that the governing Ontario Liberals and their NDP partners executed in the mid-1980s. Nuance was everything. When the two signed a pact to prop up the Grit minority, premier David Peterson refused to hold a public ceremony—he didn't want anyone to forget that he was the boss—and the NDP leader was not. But, behind the scenes, Peterson's aides nurtured the relationship, alert to the slightest whiff of discontent. "It requires a tremendous amount of sensitivity," says Peterson's former principal secretary Hershell Ezrin. "You have to rule as if you have a majority, but treat everyone as if every vote matters."

Sound advice. Paul Martin's tiny circle of Liberals does not normally do delicate. But when their minority government debuts on Oct. 4, everyone will need perpetual wooing: the premiers, the big city mayors, the chummy "gang of three" opposition leaders—and their own often malcontent backbench MPs. It's a recipe for drama, exacerbated by the Martin group's apparent inability to stake out legislative priorities.

Until then, official Ottawa is paralyzed. A chunk of the bureaucracy is on strike. Senior mandarins are sulking, convinced the Martin crowd views them as the enemy, partly because of the sponsorship scandal. Worse, many mutter that the PMO doesn't know how to govern. Lobbyists are working overtime to attract the attention of all 308 MPs. Everyone is waiting to see what Martin wants to do—and what the opposition will let him do. "Almost everyone is an outsider," says one lobbyist. "And you can not go to one single place to get things done."

> **The lesson is that voters clearly wanted a minority—and they want it to work. It will be a delicate balancing act for everyone.**

The Liberals may be weak on content, but they are working hard on process. Meetings between novice House leader Tony Valeri and his three counterparts are reportedly cautious but cordial. (They often use translators—because Valeri doesn't speak French.) All are braced for the spotlight to shift from the Commons to committees where most bills will now go immediately after tabling. House leaders will opt for fewer committees, with fewer members, to ensure MPs are not spread too thinly. (The Liberals only have about 80 MPs eligible to serve.) And if ministers want their bills to survive those hearings, they must explain each clause, woo every MP and bargain over each proposed change.

This could produce more widely accepted laws. Liberal insiders say whenever public polls put them ahead during the last campaign, they immediately dropped in their own tracking polls. The lesson: voters clearly wanted a minority—and they want it to work. It will be a delicate balancing act for everyone. Valeri must learn how to cope with prolonged weekly negotiations on House business. Although the opposition wants to restrict the occasions when defeat of a bill would trigger an election so they can modify or trounce routine bills, the Liberals insist only they can decide when to ask the Governor General to pull the plug.

In turn, argues Peter Dobell, founding director of the non-profit Parliamentary Centre, the Grits could reduce opposition exposure in the media by trying to limit the number of sitting days. They could even adjourn the House this fall for a new session in late winter—and then act by executive fiat—although that would be risky. "It is going to be very, very uncertain," he warns. Democracy may be messy—but it will get a lot more interesting very soon. M

Mary Janigan is a political and policy writer. mary.janigan@macleans.rogers.com

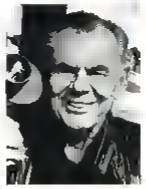
Passages

DIED Photojournalist **Eddie Adams** covered 13 wars, shot many of the world's most famous people and won the Pulitzer Prize for his 1968 photo showing the execution of a Viet Cong prisoner by the national police chief of South Vietnam. Adams, 71, died in New York City of Lou Gehrig's disease.



AWARDED In honour of their lifetime achievements, actor **Gordon Pinsent**, ballerina **Veronica Tennant**, director **Eric Till**, folksingers **Anna and Kate McGarrigle**, opera singer **Joseph Rouleau** and actor **Jean-Louis Roux** were named the 2004 Governor General's performing arts award winners. The $15,000 prizes will be issued in Ottawa on Nov. 5.

APPOINTED **David Butler-Jones**, Saskatchewan's chief medical officer between 1995 and 2002 and a former head of the Canadian Public Health Association, was named president of the new Winnipeg-based Public Health Agency of Canada.



DIED Notorious for casting only large-breasted women in his films, **Russ Meyer** is credited with creating the modern-day skin-flick. Following a string of B movies, he broke into the mainstream with 1970's *Beyond the Valley of the Dolls*. Meyer, 82, died in Hollywood from complications stemming from pneumonia.

MILESTONE **Leonard Cohen** fans celebrated the singer-songwriter/poet's 70th birthday in cities including Barcelona, Copenhagen, Vienna, Toronto and Edmonton.

PIED **Christopher Geoghegan**, 25, of Calgary, was sentenced to 30 days for hitting Alberta Premier **Ralph Klein** in the face with a banana cream pie in July 2003. The judge, who said Klein had been "punched" with the pie, ruled the premier had suffered emotional and psychological harm.

TORONTO STAR/CP- CP

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CANADIAN TIRE

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PREPARING FOR THE SEASON STARTS AT CANADIAN TIRE



Science | David Suzuki

'NO ONE CAN SAY IT'S TOO LATE'

DAVID SUZUKI WAS THERE to explain to Canadians the grand ambitions of the early space program and our Anik satellites. He helped us understand the first test-tube baby and advancing technology. Nuclear energy, genetic engineering, global warming—Suzuki walked us through it all. Marking 25 years as host of the CBC's The Nature of Things this season, the 68-year-old geneticist is Canada's best-known science journalist and advocate for the environment. But his biggest discovery has been the power—and the limitations—of TV

You were a university professor. How did you end up on national television?
I was this young hotshot scientist, going to make my mark. I did some community TV and people would ask me to comment on science. About 1968 I proposed a science show to the CBC. By then I was a hippie, had long hair, a headband, granny glasses, and I wore these flamboyant shirts and bell-bottoms. The scientific community was outraged.

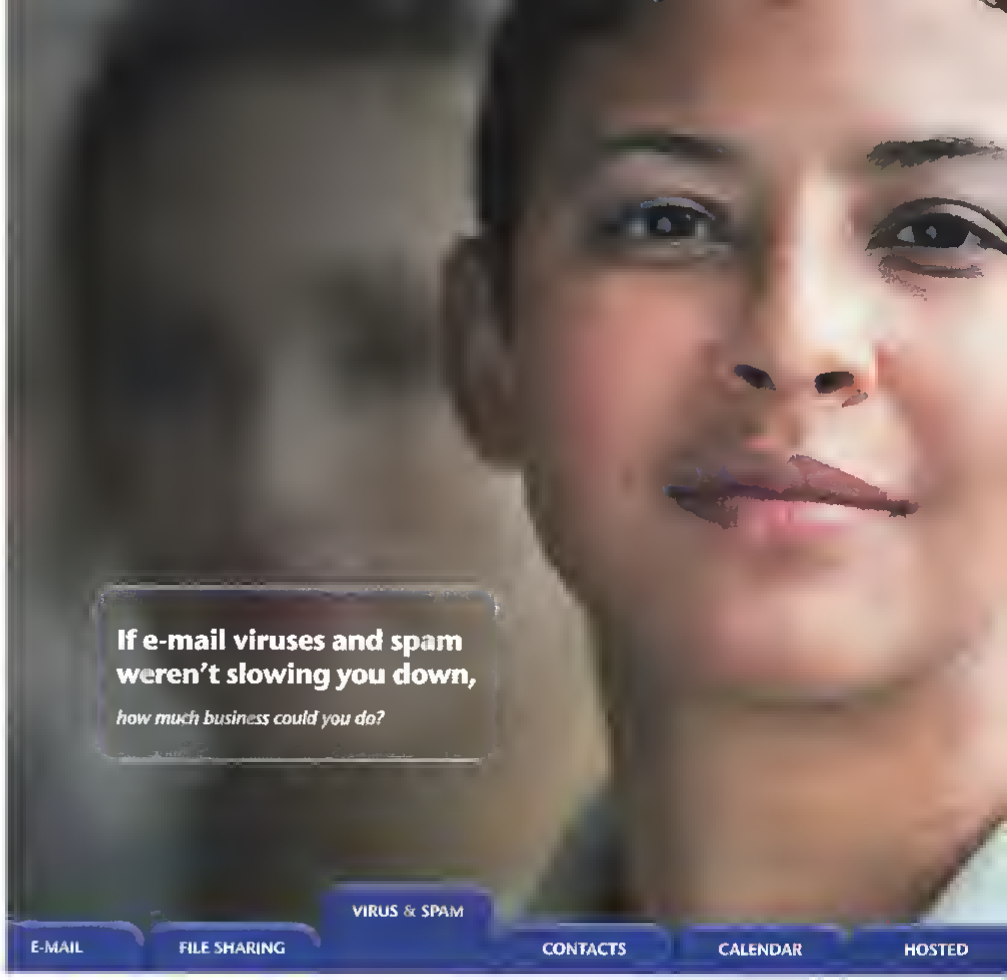
So you've actually been on TV much longer. How has the experience changed?
Well, I started with the very great conceit that if you do good programs you'll have big influence. I'm a helluva lot older and a bit wiser now. I'm not going to make any difference. I've become a part of the electronic media that's overwhelming people with bits of information. What worries me is I've been a part of the shattering of the world.

What keeps you awake at night these days?
It's that people just do not see or hear what scientists are telling them. I just watched all this stuff on the health summit, and it makes me sick. These guys act as if medical costs are just going to continue to climb. Nobody is saying, Our country is not healthy, we've got to reduce the need for medical care. We think the economy is everything, and we don't see that it—like health, like everything else—depends on the health of the planet.

If we change nothing about our behaviour, how much longer do you give us, as a species?
I don't think anyone can say. During the 1990s, the Worldwatch Institute said that if we don't turn it around in the next 10 years, we're hooped. And so a lot of us went running around saying, "This is the turnaround decade!" The Earth has been far more generous than anybody expected. But we have concrete evidence that we are hitting walls. Look at this cycle of hurricanes now. That's astonishing—another warning that climate change is kicking in. Jesus Christ, what does it take?

What do you make of this complacency?
It's terrifying. We're going right down the chute, but I don't think anyone can say it's too late. The role model for me is Nelson Mandela. If he could stay in jail all those years and have hope, nobody's got the right to say it's too late. DANYLO HAWALESHKA

PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRIS WOODS



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AIR FRANCE
making the sky the best place on earth

RUDE AND RABIDLY PRO-BUSH, FOX NEWS IS AIMING NORTH. IS CANADA READY FOR LOUDMOUTH TV?

THERE IS A RHYTHMIC thrumming deep in my skull, timed to the metronome voice of a newscaster I can't identify, and broken periodically by the chime of the Fox News Alert bell. The host—John Something, I think—is on again about what is clearly Fox News Channel's favourite story: the suspect documents CBS aired a few weeks ago, and their potential links to John Kerry's campaign. It's not Watergate, of course, but 18 hours of Fox News immersion tends to skew one's sense of perspective. Dan Rather's on-air apology has begun to sound as laughably inadequate as Fox personalities keep saying it is, while the artful juxtaposition of Kerry clips (for the war? against it?) makes the Democratic nominee appear grubby and desperate—the kind of guy who just might stoop to dirty tricks

Suddenly, we cut to the President, who is rising to address the United Nations. My most enduring images of George W. Bush date back to the fall of 2000, when I spent a week covering his victorious campaign. He struck me at the time as a pretender, a bit player cast as male lead, and nothing I've seen since has changed this perception. But on Fox, where he's treated with deference, Bush somehow comes across as earnest and poised—nothing like the strutting charlatan I'd filed in my mind. At 11 a.m. on a Tuesday, I feel the need for a beer

An entire news cycle has passed since I began monitoring what could soon be Canada's next 24-hour news service, and it's clear

the country is in for a jolt. Last April, the nation's cable TV providers applied to the Canadian Radio television and Telecommunications Commission for permission to broadcast Fox News Channel, brainchild of Rupert Murdoch and ratings sensation of the 2004 U S election campaign. They'd been turned down once before, but this time their chances look better. The public input phase wound up last month without a hitch, and a decision is now imminent. By Christmas Day, Bill O'Reilly, the network's pugnacious star, could be beaming into your living room.

Considering Fox's political baggage—and the protectionist streak that runs through Canadian cultural debate—this has all transpired with amazingly little fuss. After eight years on air, Fox has established itself as the greatest threat to American liberalism since Newt Gingrich, provoking a tide of hostile books, magazine articles, newspaper columns and even a documentary film south of the border. Walter Cronkite, the legendary CBS anchorman, has labelled it a "far-right-wing organization," while Al Franken, the *Saturday Night Live* comic cum radio host, featured it in a bestselling book *Lies and the Lying Liars Who Tell Them*. But when the CRTC invited comment on bringing the channel to Canada, fully 85 per cent of the 600 respondents voiced support. A few domestic broadcasters objected for competitive reasons, and a handful of critics on both sides of the border wrote in complaining that Fox is biased. But on the whole, Canadians seem unafraid to add a nakedly partisan presence to the dial.

So what, if any, are Fox's thoughts on Canada? Hard to know, unfortunately. While it touts its own journalism as "fair and balanced," the network doesn't exactly roll out the red carpet for Canadian reporters seeking the same. An *Ottawa Citizen* writer who contacted Fox last fall made the mistake of mentioning the ideology issue, and was refused an interview. My own requests to visit the network's New York studios were politely rebuffed. Spokeswoman Irena Briganti told me staff were too busy with the election to chat, and advised me to call back in a month. When I observed that the election would be even closer by then, her tone turned frosty. "As I said earlier," she wrote in an email, "we're extremely busy right now and inundated with requests."







'BUMS LIKE CHIRAC AND CHRÉTIEN'



Bill O'Reilly, host of Fox's top-rated current affairs show The O'Reilly Factor, *has had some choice words for Canada in the past. A sample:*

"Now if your government harbours these two deserters, doesn't send them back . . . there will be a boycott of your country which will hurt your country enormously. France is now feeling that sting."
—April 27, 2004 on air, after two U.S. soldiers fled to Canada to avoid serving in Iraq

"I got nothing against the Canadian people, but in the last few years you've swung dramatically to the left. And we in America have some questions about that."
—April 30, to Canadian Press

"If you had us up there to balance CNN, you'd give people a choice, they'd hear other points of view. Not conservative points of view—this is not a conservative network."
—April 30, to Canadian Press

"The truth is that the U.S.A. has freed more human beings in 230 years than the rest of the world combined. France has freed almost no one. Ditto Canada . . . I object to the anti-American foreign press and bums like Chirac in France and Chrétien in Canada."
—July 8, on air

Cameron (bottom right) and the co-hosts of *Fox & Friends* spread the kind of message that makes the President smile

WHICH LEFT ME no choice but to judge Fox by its product—balance be damned. So here, in a motel in suburban Rochester, N.Y., I've holed up with an emergency six-pack of Budweiser for a 48 hour marathon of news alerts, talking heads and old-fashioned partisan bickering. For sanity's sake, I'll permit myself a few forays onto rival networks, plus the odd break for meals. Otherwise, I'm confined to quarters.

Of course, I'll be scratching the mere surface of the channel's total output. In producing his recently released documentary, *Outfoxed*, filmmaker Robert Greenwald taped six months' worth of Fox broadcasts, and obtained internal memos showing that executives frequently directed the handling of important news—often to the benefit of the current administration. In the interest of keeping an open mind I try to forget Greenwald's findings. But I've hardly been watching an hour when the obvious sinks in.

My first clue comes from Carl Cameron, Fox's chief political correspondent, during a report from the campaign trail. Earlier in the day, Kerry had attacked what he saw as the president's stubborn attachment to a foundering war effort in Iraq, but Cameron has recast this as Kerry "trying to turn Bush's consistency into a weapon to use against him." And compared to his colleagues' bombast, Cameron's ham-fisted attempt at counterspin proves positively subtle. When a guest has the temerity to suggest Osama bin Laden remains at large and dangerous, John Gibson, host of *The Big Story*, begins shouting the poor man down. "He's in his cave!" hollers Gibson. "Just like Saddam was in his box! He's in his cave!"

Thus begins an onslaught of anti-Democrat, anti-liberal, pro-Republican rhetoric that only a true believer could construe as impartial. Softball questions for Bushies, sneers for Kerry backers, lingering shots of Bush noshing with the regular folk and brief clips of Kerry looking tired and awkward. Right-wing partisans billed as impartial experts fill the channel's prime time shows. One teaser promises to "get to the bottom" of the controversy over Bush's Vietnam-era military record, yet throws to an interview with Byron York, a

FOX NEWS (TOP & BOTTOM)

HO/AFP/GETTY IMAGES (TOP & BOTTOM)

political writer for the conservative biweekly *National Review*. Citing information supplied by the White House, York authoritatively confirms that Bush fulfilled his obligation to the Texas Air National Guard—forget those reports suggesting he was truant during the last two years. Untroubled by a need for documentary proof, York assures us Bush was flying "several times a month" during those last 24 months to meet his minimum of service credits. "Well," concludes host Brit Hume, apparently satisfied, "that seems to be what he did to get those points."

This curt dismissal of a key election issue—the military credentials of a commander-in-chief who has twice sent troops into battle—leaves me a tad stunned. But it does clear the decks for the story Fox really wants to tell. For the next two days, I will watch near wall-to-wall coverage of what Fox hosts are calling "Docu-drama," CBS's *mea culpa* for using suspect documents in a report alleging that Bush got into the Guard through political favouritism. Anyone can see the attraction of this saga for Fox: a legacy broadcaster with liberal leanings, while its brash, right-leaning successor enjoys its best ratings ever. And they're certainly taking full advantage. By 8 p.m. *The O'Reilly Factor* takes over, its host ecstatically repeating reports linking CBS's key source to the Kerry campaign. When guest Michael Isikoff, an investigative reporter with *Newsweek*, remarks that the uproar makes CBS look as partisan as Fox, O'Reilly beams his assent and declares his employer "the big winner" from the scandal. Fox he adds piously, "would never do anything like this."

BEYOND the bits of guilty fun, Fox is so relentlessly American you can't help wonder what it could offer Canadians

A VETERAN ANCHOR AND HIS ROOKIE MISTAKES

It wasn't a Janet Jackson-style "wardrobe malfunction"—for which CBS was fined US$550,000 last week—but there's no denying the network's bigwigs are feeling a cold breeze in some unaccustomed places. And no one is chillier than Dan Rather. His highly hyped scoop—old military memos "proving" George W. Bush never completed his Vietnam-era stint in the Air National Guard and used his family connections to escape punishment—has been exposed as a fraud. The star anchor and his news bosses issued grovelling apologies, claiming they were duped by their source, Bill Burkett, a former National Guard officer with a deep and well-publicized antipathy for the President and his family. The network has appointed a special panel to look into the mess. But conservative critics, who have long charged that Rather and his colleagues have it in for the Republicans, are baying for blood.



With his 'scoop' exposed as a fraud, Dan Rather's credibility—and career—take a hit

At the very least, it seems the veteran anchor made some rookie mistakes in rushing his story to air on the Sept. 8 edition of *60 Minutes*. No serious attempts were made to find secondary sources who could vouch for the information. And questions raised by at least two experts brought in to help authenticate the memos—the typeface and spacing were suspiciously modern—were apparently ignored. There have also been revelations that Rather's producer put Burkett in touch with a senior adviser to John Kerry, a political gift the Bush campaign has not been shy about exploiting. Dan Bartlett, the White House communications director, was almost gleeful when he pronounced the reports "shocking to believe" and "highly troubling."

It could all prove too much for the 72-year-old Rather to survive professionally. "He is very vulnerable," says Bob Steele, who teaches and writes about journalism ethics at Florida's Poynter Institute. "He now has a scarlet letter based on the journalistic problems with this story and his strong defence of it for a good period of time." Already a *bête noire* for conservatives—he famously clashed on air with Bush the elder in 1988, and there's even a website dedicated to tracking his political leanings, *www.ratherbiased.com*—Rather now faces the danger of the viewing public finding him lacking in "credibility," the essential mojo of television news.

Seemingly lost in the furor are the long-standing and still unanswered questions about Bush's military service. In fact, the CBS debacle may end up inoculating the President against further charges that he shirked his duty—a scenario so perfect that some conspiracy theorists are suggesting the whole affair was a Republican dirty trick. In Vietnam the war is long over, but in America the battle never ends. JONATHON GATEHOUSE

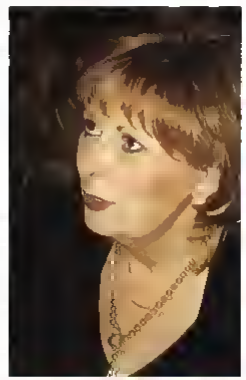
AP

PARTISANSHIP ASIDE, it must be said that Fox is a hell of a lot more fun than CNN. The pace is faster. The news readers are cuter. The screen graphics are accompanied by cool swooshing sounds and—I confess—watching the hosts nettle their guests can be oddly enjoyable. On Day 2 of my Fox-fest, I'm amused to see Senator Jay Rockefeller, a Democrat from West Virginia, getting blindsided by a question on the CBS scandal. "I was told I was coming on to discuss about Bush's address to the UN," Rockefeller snaps. Better still is a live segment featuring the real-life Soup Nazi of *Seinfeld* fame. Egged on by host Neil Cavuto, Al Yeganeh angrily denies his reputation as a tyrant, and disavows all connection to the show that made him famous. "I love people!" he says, fixing the camera with toxic glare. "I treat them like kings and queens!"

But beyond these bits of guilty fun, Fox is so relentlessly American, so unabashedly navel-gazing, you can't help wondering what it could possibly offer Canadians. CNN, for all its faults, has the virtues of a far-flung news team and a reasonably enlightened world view. On Fox, a dispatch from Iowa seems exotic. Reports from outside the country that do make its newscasts tend to be disasters, oddities or outrages against right-thinking patriots back home. Canada surfaces only once while I'm watching, in a story about plans to erect a monument in Nelson, B.C., honouring U.S. draft dodgers. "I think they're spoiled, snivelling little finks," opines a Vietnam veteran in the report. I'm not sure whether he's referring to draft dodgers or Canadians.

It is, in sum, the televised equivalent of its corporate cousin, the *New York Post*—brash, parochial and fiercely competitive. How that might play north of the border is anyone's guess. Pamela Wallin, the former broadcaster who now serves as Canada's consul general in New York, describes the network's newsgathering style as aggressive. "I think it's an important force to be recognized," adds Wallin, who's appeared on the channel a handful of times. "It's important for us to take that opportunity to reach that audience, to engage in the conversation with them." My own experience, however, suggests many Fox viewers give scarcely a thought to its politics. Four randomly selected Rochesterians I meet all plan to vote against Bush, yet none has detected bias in Fox's coverage. "I think it's a good channel," says Bobby Orpane, a 47-year-old house painter who watches Fox regularly. "It seems more upbeat than the others."

AT 6 A.M. ON DAY 3, I rise cotton mouthed from two beers I'd downed to get myself through *The O'Reilly Factor*, and flick on the breakfast show, *Fox & Friends First*. The title couldn't be more appropriate: throughout the next three hours, the show's hosts alternately chide and mock CBS over the document scandal, as if no such disaster could have befallen them. There's some sombre tut-tutting about the beheading of a second American hostage in Iraq—but only after Dr. Georgia Witkin, the channel's in-house psychologist, stops by to discuss the effect of Dan Rather's apology on the American psyche. "There's still some information missing," the doctor says ruefully. "It needs to come out before the public believes."



Wallin thinks Fox is 'an important force to be recognized'

Next come some amiable questions for White House communications director, Dan Bartlett ("Could someone from the Democratic National Committee have created these documents?"), and a public relations expert to decide whether Rather has "lost all credibility." It might seem a bit rich for a network that has just aired a full hour of rumour and innuendo to discuss writing off the career of a distinguished journalist like Rather. But at this stage practically nothing these people say surprises me. Canadians should be applauded for inviting in a network that challenges prevailing values. But if the upstarts at Fox have anything to teach us, it's that fairness and balance are highly elastic terms. M

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JONATHAN ALPEYR E/GETTY IMAGES

PRO AND CON

Debate over Fox News coming to Canada has been surprisingly muted among politicians. "We have the CRTC to make these decisions—we don't want MPs being lobbied over broadcast licences," said Liberal MP Sarmite Bulte, parliamentary secretary to Canadian Heritage Minister Liza Frulla. And advocates for homegrown TV choices are not objecting. "We're here to promote Canadian content, not keep out foreign content," said Friends of Canadian Broadcasting spokesman Ian Morrison. But TV watchers have taken up the argument with vehemence and wit. A sample of the many submissions filed with the CRTC:

"[Fox's] application specifically states that they will present an 'objective' view of the day's events, but history of their channel in the U.S. does not bear this out. If they are allowed to broadcast here, it should either be with similar controls as those enacted for al-Jazeera, or perhaps forced to put a disclaimer in their programming that it is not 'fair and balanced.'"

"In the interest of Canadian residents, the availability of programs such as Fox Network is a desirable imperative. If CNN can display its programs on cable, with its own particular bias, then another point of view that is acceptable and desired by a significant number of Canadians should not be withheld arbitrarily from viewers."

"I would question the need for an openly right-wing, extremely biased, Republican voice in this country. As a Canadian I feel it is not only my right, but also my duty to avoid the influence of insidious and potentially destructive viewpoints like those repeatedly expressed on Fox. Do your duty, CRTC—protect us from redneck news."

"I'm writing on behalf of the proposal to bring Fox News to Canadian TV. I COMPLETELY endorse the idea! I am sick of watching CNN and I want to see the other side."

WHO'S WINNING THE NEWS WARS?

FOX SQUARES OFF AGAINST CNN

CALL IT WAR. With five weeks remaining before the next U.S. presidential election—and the country so deeply divided that discussing politics in public is something you might want to think twice about if you value your dental work—Republicans and Democrats have entered the Blood-sport phase of their respective campaigns. Last week, Democratic party nominee John Kerry told an audience in New York City that the administration has traded Saddam Hussein "for a chaos that has left America less secure." Republicans took that to mean that given the choice, Kerry wouldn't have sent troops to Iraq, despite his earlier support for disarming Hussein—another sign of the Massachusetts senator's contradictory and therefore suspect character.

Speaking in Iowa at the beginning of September, Vice-President Dick Cheney said, "It's absolutely essential that on Nov. 2, we make the right choice, because if we make the wrong choice then the danger is that we'll get hit again." Democrats interpreted that as Cheney saying a vote for Kerry is a vote for al Qaeda. The smears are ugly. They're also entertaining. And while partisanship might not exactly grease the wheels of government, it makes for great TV. As a result, the ongoing news wars in the U.S. are as vicious as the campaigns they're covering.

On cable, the fight features the polemics of Fox News ("Fair & Balanced") versus the drier, more even-keeled delivery of CNN ("Most trusted name in news"). During the Republican National Convention in New York, Fox more than doubled CNN's Nielsen numbers. Conversely, CNN bested Fox on the first night of the Democratic National Convention during the three hours or so that climaxed with the speech by former presidential scandal magnet Bill Clinton.

As a general rule, though, Fox beats CNN in the numbers game. And though Fox does broadcast news stories, the model for the channel is more of a talk-radio format, or talk TV, which their CNN rivals have now adopted. Prime-time Fox shows like *The O'Reilly Factor* are unashamed about practising advocacy journalism. Bill O'Reilly, the show's host and Fox's breakout star, once worked at *Inside Edition*. He's skilled at needling the competition. A collection of titles from recent "Talking Points," an editorial segment on his show, includes: "Desperation on the Far Left," "Fat Cat Rockers for Kerry," "GOP Comes Out Guns Blazing."



Liberals own comedy, and news parody shows like *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*

Liberals have been quick to disparage the network's tabloid style branding of the news landscape, and its right-wing, rabidly pro-George W. Bush bias. Outside Fox's headquarters in midtown Manhattan, the news ticker is Republican red, CNN's ticker is blue, the colour of Democrats. It's not as simple as that—both channels claim objectivity in reporting—but prominent left-wing critics portray Fox as less a news-gathering agency and more an outgrowth of the Bush administration. That feeling was distilled in the political action committee MoveOn.org's full-page ad in the *New York Times* in July. The ad's text stated, "Communists had *Pravda*. Republicans have Fox." Point taken.

Fox News CEO Roger Ailes has strong ties to the current administration—he worked for former presidents Richard Nixon and George

PAUL HAWTHORNE/GETTY IMAGES





H. W. Bush—a fact publicized in a documentary released last summer called *Outfoxed: Rupert Murdoch's War on Journalism* (Murdoch is the chairman of News Corporation Ltd., the multinational conglomerate that owns Fox and many other media properties). In the film, by Robert Greenwald, former Fox staffers allege that their employers ordered them to slant their coverage to favour conservatives. And then there was Fox's supercilious lawsuit against former *Saturday Night Live* comedian and current left-wing radio host Al Franken. The liberal activist titled his 2003 book *Lies and the Lying Liars Who Tell Them: A Fair and Balanced Look at the Right*. Fox called Franken's use of "fair and balanced" a trademark infringement, but withdrew their complaint after a federal judge refused to block Franken from using the phrase.

As a result of the news wars, watching the presidential campaigns can be a little bipolar. If you watch Fox or read the *New York Post* (another News Corporation holding), you might be led to understand that the insurgency in Iraq is comparable to post-Second World War reconstruction troubles in Europe. You also might learn that Kerry's

As a general rule, Fox's talk TV format is beating CNN in the numbers game

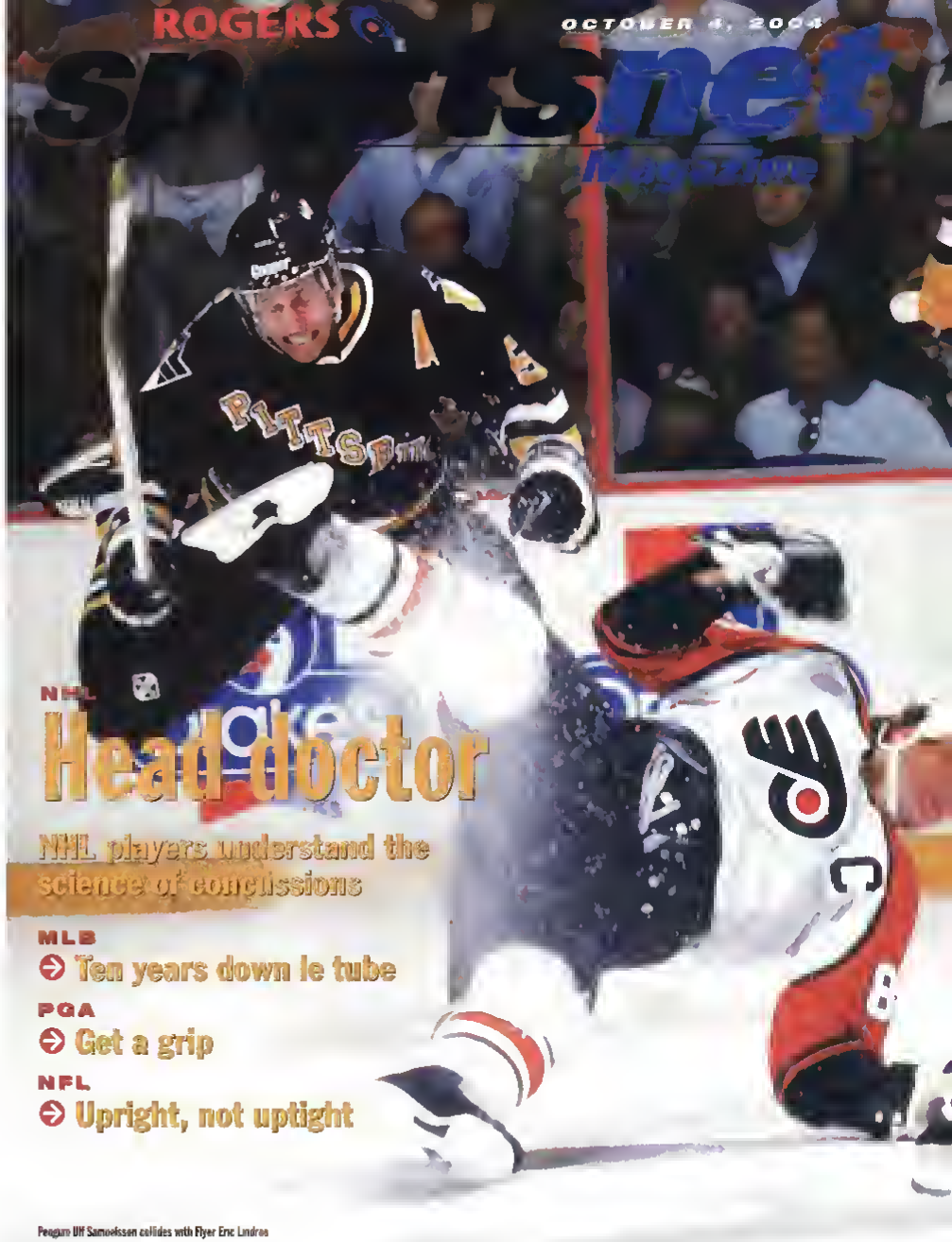
testimony before the U.S. Senate after his return from Vietnam—in which he discussed "atrocities"—was tantamount to treason. Most importantly, you might conclude that the Bush administration's pre-emptive doctrine (shoot first, democracy later) is a sign of strength, while other models of foreign policy are irrelevant and weak-minded.

But if you watch or read the more liberal *New York Times*, for instance, you might be led to believe that the insurgency in Iraq is escalating into a full-blown civil war, one over which the U.S. is rapidly losing control. You might decide that Kerry's testimony before the Senate was nothing short of heroic—a painful confession meant to alter the course of the government's Vietnam policy. You also might believe that Bush's pre-emptive doctrine runs counter to all the lessons learned since the end of the Second World War, and that far from making the world more secure, the administration is tipping the balance in favour of terrorism.

ON CABLE, as in the presidential election, it's the most entertaining competitor that draws the most popular support

The trend toward talkier, more personable segments isn't likely to fade. For the most part, conservatives have a lock on talk radio, and Fox's ratings are a sure sign that the equation applies to television as well. (Popular CNN draws like *Anderson Cooper 360°* and *American Morning* are as accessible as Fox's opinionated segments, only not nearly as incendiary.) But it's the liberals who own comedy, and news parody programs like Comedy Central's *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart* (Rathergate headline: "Documents on Bush's service are undergoing the scrutiny usually reserved for blue dress stains") remain *terra incognita* for Republicans. In a way, *The Daily Show* is a Fox News mirror image. Both capitalize on the U.S. obsession with infotainment. On cable, as in the election, the most entertaining competitor draws the most support. M

PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE SIMON



Penguin Ulf Samuelsson collides with Flyer Eric Lindros



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Editor's Note
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Today's professional athletes keep raising their game to new heights. But they don't do it without lots of help.

There's more to sport than meets the eye. Behind the scenes, armies of specialists help today's top athletes to perform.

In Montreal, senior writer Scott Burnside talked to one of them **(Head shots, p. S4)**, Dr. Karen Johnston, Director of the McGill Sport Medicine Centre's Concussion Program, has spent more than 10 years evaluating the impact of a concussion, particularly on NHL hockey players. She has delivered bad news on occasion to former stars like goalie Mike Richter, telling them that they'll never play again. But her recovery programs have given other players a new lease on their athletic lives.


Over and out (p. S4)

Professional golfers seldom suffer head injuries, but they require just as much attention to keep their heads on straight under pressure. Golf analyst John Gordon identifies the squad of specialists who apply their expertise to luminaries like Tiger Woods, Vijay Singh and Mike Weir **(Get a grip, p. S10)**. Some of them even walk through water to help their hapless charges.

If anyone in sport has a right to think about what might have been, Felipe Alou and his Montreal Expos earned it in 1994 **(Ten years down le tube, p. S8)**. With the best record in major-league baseball, a lineup of Hall of Famers and a stadium full of rabid fans, the Expos watched helplessly as a strike was called to end their season. "The day the strike started in 1994 was the day baseball in Montreal ended," Alou told baseball insider Marty York. Ten years later, it's gone for good from Montreal.


Ten years after (p. S8)

Some people might wonder what makes Indianapolis Colts place-kicker Mike Vanderjagt tick **(Upright, not uptight, p. S12)**. The Oakville, Ont., native is the best in the business at the moment, and he doesn't hesitate to let you know it. But as *Indianapolis Star* writer Mike Chappell shows, Vanderjagt didn't get to the top of his game without confidence.

Getting inside an athlete's head: That's what we do at *Sportsnet Magazine*.

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ROGERS

OPENERS



DOWN, ON THE CORNER

Canada's Patrick Carpentier hugs the corner in his Forsythe Racing Ford on his way to winning the Champ Car World Series Bridgestone Grand Prix in September at Laguna Seca Raceway in Monterey California.

Head shots

Thanks to specialists like Montreal's Dr. Karen Johnston, NHL players and other athletes take concussions more seriously than ever.

by Scott Burnside

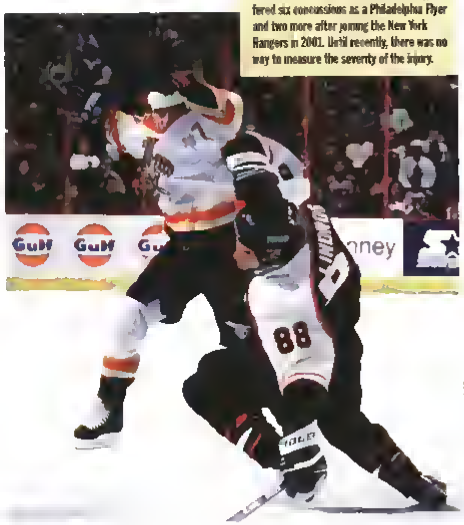
TO HEAR FORMER NEW YORK RANGER MIKE RICHTER describe Dr. Karen Johnston, you'd think the concussion specialist had delivered good news to one of the finest goaltenders of his generation. Instead, Johnston had informed the former Stanley Cup champion, Olympic silver medallist and World Cup of Hockey hero that his playing days were over.

"Obviously when you're talking about a career-ending injury, it's one of the worst days you can imagine," says Richter. "But I wouldn't have wanted it to be in anyone else's hands. Not just her knowledge. Her approach. She was very, very understanding about the emotions connected to the limitations of what you can do."

That approach has helped to make Dr. Johnston, a neurosurgeon and Director of the McGill Sport Medicine Centre's Concussion Program, the most recognized concussion expert in North America.

HOW BAD DOES IT HURT?

Eric Lindros, on the receiving end of a hit from former Florida Panther Bill Lindsay, suffered six concussions as a Philadelphia Flyer and two more after joining the New York Rangers in 2001. Until recently, there was no way to measure the severity of the injury.



BRUCE BENNETT / GETTY IMAGES

Richter's injury was just one of more than 700 concussions that the National Hockey League has studied since the 1996-1997 season, says Pittsburgh Penguins team physician Dr. Charles Burke. While that number is staggering, the incidence of concussions in the NHL has actually fallen, from 140 three seasons ago to fewer than 90 last season. While the number of concussions has fallen, the number of man-games lost has gone up, indicating that players and teams alike now take the injury more seriously.

Dave Dryden, head of the NHL's injury-analysis panel, attributes the drop in frequency to a number of factors, from improved equipment to better education. "I don't think it's one thing. It's a whole series of them," Dryden says.

Physicians like Dr. Johnston have helped. Every player who shares his story with Dr. Johnston increases the odds that the next generation of concussion victims will enjoy better, speedier, safer treatment.

Dr. Johnston began studying concussions in the late 1980s and early 1990s at the University of Toronto, where she obtained a Ph.D. in neuroscience followed by a medical degree. At the time, NHL concussion research depended on anecdotal evidence shared by team doctors whose real specialty was broken bones, cut lips and twisted muscles. Players concerned about keeping their place in the lineup would minimize symptoms and play through pain. For some, it was a costly gamble. "There was no way to measure the injury's severity or recovery from the injury," says Dr. Johnston.

> **"She was incredible, she had me do every conceivable test. She left no stone unturned."**
>
> **BOYD DEVEREAUX**

Fifteen years later players understand the seriousness of a concussion and the danger of ignoring it. If they get one, they actively seek out information and treatment. "That's huge, actually," says Dr. Johnston, who has treated NHL stars such as Richter, Eric Lindros and, most recently, New Jersey Devils captain Scott Stevens.

The media attention surrounding such high-profile patients has contributed to Dr. Johnston's broader mandate, to educate athletes, parents and coaches across the athletic spectrum. To this end, she has written dozens of papers for professional and popular publications, from *The Clinical Journal of Sport Medicine* and the *Canadian Journal of Neurological Sciences* to *Bicycling Magazine*.

IT S ALL IN YOUR HEAD

Every athlete who shares his story with Dr. Karen Johnston, Director of the McGill Sport Medicine Centre's Concussion Program, increases the odds that the next generation of concussion victims will enjoy better, speedier, safer treatment.



PIERRE OBENDRAUF

Dr. Johnston looks far beyond the immediate injury when assessing a concussion. She delves into an NHL player's background, how he learned to skate, when he first played in a league that allowed bodychecking, when he suffered injuries as a junior or collegiate player. "Junior is a really critical period," she says, because younger players often don't report injuries, and they usually recover more quickly from an initial concussion.

But once an athlete suffers one concussion, he's more likely to suffer a second and third, as well, and they may result from a much less severe blow to the

Heads up

NHL players suffer about 25% fewer concussions than they did in the 1980s. Some of the reasons include:

- better-designed helmets with more cushion and a harder shell
- helmet chin straps fastened more securely;
- more exterior padding on elbow pads,
- an NHL crackdown on blows to the head and less tolerance among players for high hits,
- the removal of seamless glass in NHL arenas,
- heightened player awareness of concussion symptoms,
- better treatment, supported in particular by neuropsychological tests, and
- instructional videos that show players how to avoid concussions, including not turning away from a check, especially near the boards.

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BRUCE BENNETT / GETTY IMAGES

GAME OVER

A second concussion causes more serious damage to the brain than the first. By the time Hall of Famer Pat Lafontaine ended his 15-year NHL career after the 1998 season, he had suffered six serious concussions.

head. Those subsequent injuries also take longer to heal.

Along with a better understanding of the injury, Dr. Johnston and others have developed a more formal approach to treatment. Dr. Johnston's "back to play protocol", for example, follows a standardized series of steps in recovery. It requires the assessment and interpretation of symptoms such as nausea, dizziness, fatigue and irritability before an athlete can return to competition.

"She's turning it more into an objective kind of study," says Scott Suter, head therapist for the Montreal Alouettes. "I think it's very comforting for the players. It helps the players to understand a little bit more."

Athletes with concussions also undergo neuro-psychological testing, a battery of procedures that allow doctors to gauge a patient's memory, response time and other factors. Players who fully recover from concussions before returning to action reduce their risk of re-injury, and these tests help to determine the point of full recovery.

"It was pretty grueling," recalls Boyd Devereaux, a forward with the Phoenix Coyotes, who suffered a blow to the head that left him unconscious with bleeding on the brain in April 2000. "I felt like a lab animal." The concussion was Devereaux's second in three years, and he expected the worst when he consulted Dr. Johnston. But after examining Devereaux and the data from his tests, she pronounced him fit to play.

"She was incredible," Devereaux says. "She had me do every conceivable test. She left no stone unturned."

Less than two weeks after his injury, Devereaux was cleared to play, "which was a complete 180-degree turn from where I'd been," he recalls. "I have Karen to thank for going to the lengths she did."

In addition to the NHL and the NHL Players Association, Dr. Johnston works as a neurosurgeon and consultant with soccer, judo, women's rugby and alpine skiing teams and with Cirque du Soleil. She sits on the advisory board of several Think First/Sport Smart programs for athletic safety and, since the late 1990s, has advised the CFL's Alouettes on concussion-related issues. In fact, Alouette players and staff were so impressed with her work during their championship season in 2002 that they made sure Dr. Johnston received a Grey Cup ring.

"She's a brilliant woman, knowing the brain as she does," says Richter, who retired prior to the start of last season after being kneed in the head in a game on November 5, 2002. "You feel you're in the presence of someone who's in control of themselves and their field. I always feel better after seeing her."

Scott Burnside is the Senior Writer for Sportsnet Magazine.

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WHAT CAN BROWN DO FOR YOU?®

Ten years down le tube

The Expos could have won it all in 1994. Instead they began their long, sad march into major-league oblivion.

By Marty York

THIS WILL BE, BUD SELIG INSISTS, THE FINAL SEASON in Montreal for the Expos. "At the risk of sounding like a broken record," says the commissioner of Major League Baseball, "I will tell you that we are unquestionably in the process of ensuring that the Expos will no longer be in Montreal when the 2005 season rolls around."

If you believe Selig, whatever obstacles appear to be in the way of the club's controversial relocation to northern Virginia or Washington, D.C., will be removed in the off season. And then we'll bid adieu to the only National League team in Canadian history.

Some will bitterly mourn the loss. They will argue that the Expos, born in 1969, were far too young to die in Montreal.

If you agree with Felipe Alou, however, the Expos actually were sent to their deathbed a little more than 10 years ago. It was Aug. 11, 1994. The Expos had been dominating and dazzling opponents en route to the best record in the major leagues – 74-40 – when a strike was called and the plug was pulled on the season. Alou was the team's manager.

As far as I'm concerned, the day the strike started in 1994 was the day baseball in Montreal ended," recalls Alou, now the manager of the San Francisco Giants. "We had some kind of team that year. We had everything you could ask for – speed, power, defence. We had the best outfield in the game – Larry Walker, Marquis Grissom and Moises [Alou, his son].

> **"As far as I'm concerned, the day the strike started in 1994 was the day baseball in Montreal ended."**
>
> **Felipe Alou**

"We had superior pitching with Pedro Martinez in our rotation and John Wetteland in our bullpen. We had chemistry. We had the right mentality. And, mainly, we had so much talent. There was no doubt in any of our minds that we were going to win the World Series in '94. No doubt at all. Everyone in baseball knew we were the team to beat."

What's sad, really, is that our fans were in love with us that season. We were going to give the fans what they wanted, what they deserved – a championship. Instead, the people in Montreal got nothing in '94, except, I guess, slaps to their faces."

The slaps came in the form of a cancelled World Series. It was the first time since 1904 that baseball's Fall Classic was not played.

"I recall fans in Montreal telling me they would never ever forgive us," Alou says. "I remember them saying they would never watch the Expos again. And they meant what they said."

When games resumed after the strike in 1995, attendance figures plummeted throughout the majors. In Montreal, the Expos became a bad investment and a money-losing venture.

In 2002, after U.S. businessman Jeffrey Loria turned his back on the Expos and bought the Florida Marlins instead, Montreal's baseball franchise became an orphan and was placed in the hands of the other major-league owners. The owners never liked the idea of financing the Expos because the economic woes cut the owners' profits or increased their losses. That's why Selig is doing his utmost to ensure the club is in the hands of genuine and independent investors below the border in 2005.

But what if there wasn't a strike in 1994? What if the Expos had won the whole enchilada that season? Would the Expos be prospering instead of experiencing their last hurrah?

"My own feeling is that baseball in Montreal never recovered after 1994 because the Expos were never able to recapture what we had that season," says Moises Alou, who now plays with the Chicago Cubs.

"If the Expos went on to win the World Series in 1994, baseball would have been very big in Montreal for a long time. There would have been plenty of money from merchandising and ticket sales and TV revenue. Instead, people just stopped caring. So instead of having stability because of the success in 1994, the owners of the Expos ended up with financial problems. The fans felt frustrated and weren't about to come back, so the money wasn't there for the owners to even pay players in 1995, and it was obvious that the Expos wouldn't have the same team in 1995 as we had in 1994."

Walker, the B.C. native who is generally perceived as the finest Canadian baseball player in history, was allowed to jump to the Colorado Rockies as a free agent before the 1995 season began. The Expos' owners felt compelled to dump even more salary, so they traded Wetteland and Grissom. Ditto for Ken Hill, another one of the Expos' top starting pitchers in 1994.

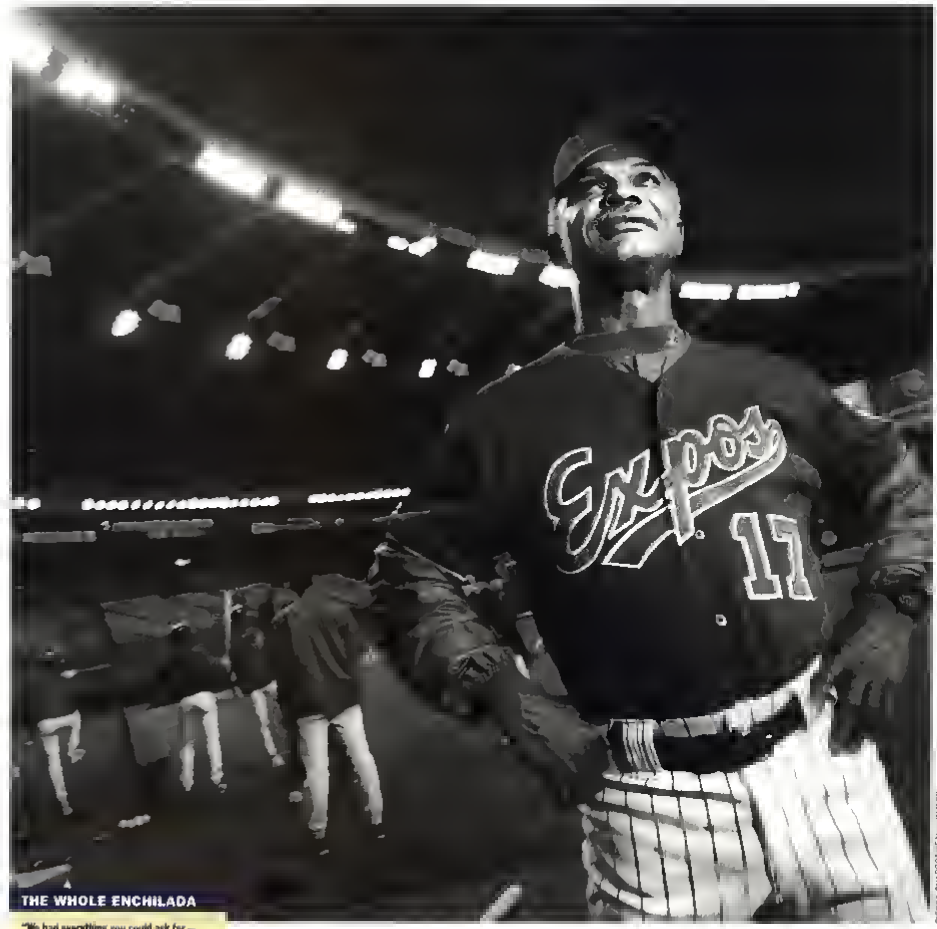
"I remember a few of us offering to take pay cuts in '95, that's how bad we wanted to stay together," recalls Grissom, now a member of the Giants, "but the owners couldn't even handle that, so that was it. The party was over in Montreal."

Grissom is reminded of 1994 every time he enters Felipe Alou's office outside the Giants' clubhouse. That's where he sees a team picture of the 1994 Expos, right beside the manager's desk.

"In my mind," Felipe Alou says, "we won the Series that season. I know it wasn't played, but that's how I think. In my mind, we were the best team in baseball, maybe one of the best teams ever. But the fans in Montreal never felt that way. They never got closure in 1994."

And next season, if Selig is correct, they won't have baseball, either.

Marty York is Sportsnet's baseball insider.



PIERRE CHARBONNEAU - MLB/MPA

THE WHOLE ENCHILADA

"We had everything you could ask for – speed, power, defence. And we had the best outfield in the league – Larry Walker, Marquis Grissom and Moises [Alou, his son]."



COURTESY OF THE MONTREAL EXPOS

For a full-sized team photo of the 1994 Montreal Expos, visit www.Sportsnet.ca.

Get a grip

Today's top Tour professionals consult their coach, their personal trainer, their psychologist, their nutritionist, their physician, their web master, their hypnotist... before they ever hit a golf ball.

by John Gordon

BEN HOGAN, ICON AND ICONOCLAST, TOILED ALONE on the practice range, proclaiming that true champions found their game "in the dirt," by which he meant practice, practice, practice. The truth of his motto can be proven by his record of 64 tournament victories, including nine majors.

Canadian Open champ Vijay Singh has taken Hogan's advice to heart. According to the estimates of a prominent U.S. golf publication, Singh has hit more than 2.3 million practice balls, not including chips and putts.

But in contrast to Hogan – who confided in and took counsel from only one person: his wife Valerie – Singh has mixed far more elements into the formula that has fueled his recent ascent to the top of the world rankings.

To achieve his stunning metamorphosis into the premier player on the planet, Singh not only worked tirelessly on his swing, but also invested in an entourage that includes a coach, a personal trainer and a nutritionist. Singh's trainer, Joey Diovisalvi, has also hefted the big Fijian's bag on occasion, most recently in a victorious outing at the Buick Open.

"He's the backbone. He has pushed me so hard the last two years," says Singh, who has built a two-storey workout facility at his Florida home. "He's in the gym with me in the mornings and in the evenings, every day, two times a day, five or six days a week. When I go home, he's there at home doing the same thing." The results are noticeable, and not just in the win column. At 41, Singh is leaner and much stronger than he was two years ago when he first hooked up with Diovisalvi, who works with Singh for an hour and a half, six days a week, year-round.

"He has the kind of desire, discipline and commitment that very few athletes have," says Diovisalvi.

Those few would include Mike Weir, who has worked with Dr. Rich Gordin, a Utah State University psychologist, since 1997. Long noted for his dedication to hard work on the physical and technical aspects of his game with coach Mike Wilson, Weir sometimes lets his mind play tricks on him.

Gordin, the son and brother of golf coaches, helps Weir to neutralize those pressures, which can poison even a star's self-confidence. One of the first people Weir thanked after winning the 2003 Masters was the man he calls his "mental coach."

"He's been a real calming influence on me," Weir says. "Whenever we talk, nothing's a problem. We're always finding solutions to things. Rich understands the game so well."

Jack Nicklaus has said that he has seen many players come on Tour over the years with physical games that approximated his own. But only Tiger Woods has come close on the mental side. Woods probably owes that attribute to his father, Earl, a former Green Beret, who used various interrogation and deprivation techniques to toughen his son. Those techniques were reinforced by subliminal suggestion and hypnosis at the hands of sports psychologist Dr. Jay Brunza, a family friend.

At some point, however, Tiger assumed he could function just fine on his own. He dropped his swing coach, Butch Harmon, after his most successful season, and he rarely consults with Brunza. But after a recent lapse in his performance, he began working with instructor Hank Haney, and he may reintroduce himself to Brunza for re-grooving.

As one of the first players to concentrate on his fitness level, Tiger set the standard for others. He also set the bar for off-course diversions, such as a Website, a charitable foundation and fundraising concerts, all of which require staff to administer. In building his entourage, Woods has turned himself into a human conglomerate.

Having an entourage comes in handy for other reasons, too. At this year's Players Championship, England's Ian Poulter angrily snatched his ball off the fourth green, fumbling it into the pond edging the green.

With the possibility looming of a two-stroke penalty for a lost ball, Poulter signaled to his personal trainer, Kam Bhabra, who was in the gallery. Bhabra dutifully dropped his trousers and waded into the water in his underwear, found the ball and returned it to Poulter. The two strokes Poulter saved made a difference of about US$20,000.

"The guy would do anything for me," Poulter said. "He will be rewarded very nicely."

Ben Hogan would have scoffed at the notion of surrounding himself with an entourage. As he said, "The only thing a golfer needs is more daylight." And he would have waded after his own ball.

John Gordon is the golf analyst for Rogers Sportsnet.



Vijay's backbone: Vijay Singh (right) and trainer-turned-caddy Joey Diovisalvi at July's Buick Open

MIKE ELLIS/GETTY IMAGES



Got the yips?: Tiger Woods (bottom) and caddy Steve Williams at July's Buick Open

SCOTT HALLERAN/GETTY IMAGES



Show me the way to go home: Mike Weir (left) and caddy Brendan Little at the 2004 Canadian Open.

CP PHOTO/RYAN REMIORZ



Upright, not uptight

When it comes to NFL placekickers, Mike Vanderjagt is as good as they come. So why shouldn't he feel confident?

By Mike Chappell

BLAST-OFF

Indianapolis Colts placekicker Mike Vanderjagt took an NFL record streak of 41 consecutive successful regular-season field goals and an 87.9% conversion rate into the Colts' 2004 season opener against the reigning Super Bowl champions New England Patriots.

MIKE VA[illegible] MOST AC[illegible] kicker in[illegible] of the NFL, sp[illegible] away from the Indianapolis Colts in of Campbellville, Ont. 2[illegible] 45 minute[illegible] Highway 401 from To[illegible] and The Farm Museum.

But you can't miss the place that Vanderjagt, his wife, Janalyn, and their five-year old son, Jay Michael, call home. It's not just the sprawling 15,500-square-foot house with an indoor basketball court that catches your eye. It's the football goalpost towering over the backyard fence, installed by Colts officials so their prized kicker would only have to walk out his back door if he had the urge to work out during the off-season.

"People drive by all the time and slow down and look," says Janalyn, who occasionally shags footballs for her husband. "They probably try to figure out, 'What the heck?'"

They could be trying to figure out what the heck's up with her hubby, too. Vanderjagt is anything but simple to figure out.

Colt punter Hunter Smith has been Vanderjagt's holder for placements since 1999 and is his closest friend on the team. When someone once asked Smith, "How would you describe Mike?", there was silence as Smith looked up. More as he scratched his head.

"Sorry," he finally said. "It takes me a few seconds. I'm trying to choose from the 400 directions I could go."

In terms of the NFL and the Colts, Vanderjagt is as good as it gets. On September 9, he took an NFL record streak of 41 consecutive successful regular-season field goals into the Colts' season opener against the Super Bowl champion New England Patriots. (He made it 42 in a row before missing a game-tying 48-yarder as the game ended.) His 87.9% conversion rate on field goals (174 of 198) was an all-time league record, 5% ahead of his closest rival, Philadelphia's David Akers.

If the numbers make him tick, they don't begin to define him. So who is Mike Vanderjagt?

After finally choosing one of 400 directions, Smith says, 'On one hand, he's an unnaturally confident person. Not necessarily supernaturally confident, just sort of weird confident."

Is he cocky?

"No," Smith replies. "It's probably higher-end confidence. But on the other hand, the guy is very intelligent, has a fabulous sense of humour and is a lot of fun to be around. He's a great dad. He's a 34-year old kid. All of those things."

Janalyn nods in agreement. "That's perfectly said, to a T," she says. 'A lot of people think he's cocky. Really, he's just confident. When he does or says silly things, he's just putting on a show. Sometimes Mike is just giving people what they want."

There's no question Vanderjagt has given the Colts what they want. After six years with the team, he owns single-season club records for points (157 in 2003), field goals (37 in 2003) and field-goal percentage (100%, 37 for 37 in 2003). His 755 points rank second in team history, and he'll chase down leader Dean Biasucci (783 points) in short order.

Vanderjagt also has calmly converted nine game-winning field goals during his career. Three came in 2003, when the Colts won the AFC South with a 12-4 record and reached the AFC title game. The Colts won their season opener 9-6 as Vanderjagt hit a 45-yard field goal with one second to play, and they won their regular-season finale 20-17 on his 43-yarder with no time on the clock.

> **"Is he cocky?"**

But when it comes to Vanderjagt, his substance too often is overshadowed by his style.

Certainly the man has style. He speaks his mind, consequences be damned. There was his high-profile off-season verbal spat with quarterback Peyton Manning after the 2002 season. Shortly after the Colts were humiliated 41-0 by the New York Jets in the first round of the playoffs, Vanderjagt went on a Toronto all-sports cable TV show and questioned the leadership qualities of Manning and coach Tony Dungy.



AP PHOTO / JEFF ROBBINS

MIKE VANDERJAGT

Height:	**6' 5"**	**Born: Oakville, Ont.,**	**NFL Experience: 7**
Weight:	**211 lb.**	**03/24/1970**	**CFL experience: 2+**

1989:	Signed by Michigan State University as quarterback
1992:	Graduated West Virginia University
1993:	Played two games for the Saskatchewan Roughriders Cut four times by CFL teams – Saskatchewan, Hamilton, Toronto (twice)
1996:	First full CFL season, Toronto Argonauts
1998:	Joined Indianapolis Colts

More recently, Vanderjagt weighed in when the Colts used their seventh-round pick in last April's draft on Penn State kicker David Kimball. The Colts deemed Vanderjagt's kickoffs unacceptable and brought in a possible upgrade. In turn, Vanderjagt deemed their assessment flawed, and he said so. In the end, Vanderjagt's position was vindicated. The Colts waived Kimball.

"I never want people to think negative of me about anything," says Vanderjagt, who won two Grey Cups with the Toronto Argonauts before joining the Colts as an undrafted free agent in 1998. "Even the whole Peyton deal. I hated it personally, because people started saying something negative about me when it really wasn't that at all.

"The only thing I'd like to change is people who don't know me think I'm cocky, and cocky comes off negative. Cocky is if you're at a restaurant and somebody asks you for an autograph and you're like, 'Man, do you know who I am? Leave me alone.' That's cocky. I sign autographs until I'm blue in the face."

Vanderjagt's competitive drive and "higher-end confidence" as Smith puts it, can be traced to his high-school days at White Oaks Secondary School in Oakville, Ont. In his last year, he averaged 31 points during basketball season. He was 23-2 as the school's starting quarterback, a nationally ranked soccer goalie and a smooth-skating centre and leading scorer for the hockey team. Now he's still the best at what he does.

"Five years ago," Vanderjagt says, "It was about job security. Now it's just to be the best, to keep your numbers up and not let anybody catch you."

That's not cocky. That's confident.

Mike Chappell covers the Colts for The Indianapolis Star



Game Over
MIKE TOTH

Come back, coach!: Carey Bracko says he can win five more championships without losing his balance.

He's been threatened with a lawsuit for not giving a kid enough ice time.



Geoff Jackson

Furious fathers have wanted to beat him up after he cut their sons from the team.

And still, Carey Bracko can hardly wait to get back behind the bench.

"I'd go back in a minute," says the 39-year old Bracko. "I just needed some time off to re-charge the batteries."

Bracko deserves a break. He has coached in the Triple A Midget ranks in Calgary for six years and has five first-place finishes and a pair of national titles on his resumé. But the local minor hockey association still asked to see that resume this year when Bracko approached them about bringing his whistle out of retirement. "I took last season off and got the itch again. But when I approached the board, they told me to send them a resume."

Welcome to hockey politics.

"There's people on the committee who have kids trying out for the team, and I think they were worried I might cut them," Bracko chuckles.

The truth is, they had a reason to be concerned. When Bracko assumes control of a team, it's his way or the highway. When he took over the Calgary Midget Northstars a few years ago, the dressing room was a disaster. There were spittoons set up to aid the player's chewing-tobacco habit. Playboy centerfolds adorned some of the lockers, and the stereo system boomed continuously.

"I cleaned all that stuff up in a hurry," says Bracko. "A dressing room is a place to put on your equipment. It's not a social club."

But Bracko says his biggest challenge was dealing with parents who believe little Johnny is on his way to the NHL.

> "I can help a team win."

"Parents can be absolutely vicious," he says. "The most abused people in minor hockey aren't the referees, they're the coaches."

If you can push past pushy parents, though, the rewards can be enormous. When Bracko led the Northstars to one of their national crowns, he earned a player with a terrible reputation. The young man had a lousy attitude. He'd been kicked out of school and was even linked to a local gang.

"I had parents tell me that they were going to pull their kid off the team if I kept this guy," Bracko recalls. "But by the end of the year, he was voted the best forward in the league and he went on to play university hockey and had a pro career in Europe."

Does Bracko have any professional aspirations?

"Hockey is my passion and I feel I have a lot to offer," he says. "But do I really want to go to the Western Hockey League and ride the bus for ten years to prove it?"

Besides, Bracko says, the grassroots level is where hockey is hurting the most.

One of the biggest problems?

People who have all the fancy coaching certificates, but no common hockey sense to go with it.

"A lot of them just don't have the right skill-set to be successful," he says. "They're like the guy who wants to be CEO of a company but can't even organize the loading dock."

Bracko feels the secret to coaching kids is to have a balanced life. Bracko himself owns one of Calgary's most successful furniture stores. He's married, with a young child and another on the way. If he could get minor hockey officials to buy into that balance, his job would be a lot easier.

Bracko believes, for example, that summer programs for elite players are sapping the spirit from the game. "Kids are playing way too much hockey," he grumbles. "The players are tired, the volunteers are fed up, and so are the coaches."

But even with all of the headaches and hurdles, Bracko can't wait for his next assignment. "I believe that if I can get into the right situation, I can help a team win at least five more national championships."

But more importantly, he wants to continue giving back to a game that's given him so much. "So many people put in a lot of effort to help me play hockey when I was growing up. Now, it's my turn to re-pay the system."

Mike Toth is a co-anchor on Sportsnetnews Sunday to Wednesday.

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THE CALM BEFORE THE STORM

The Liberal party has been almost eerily tranquil. Don't expect that to last.



AFTER AN ERA defined by feuding between the Jean Chretien and Paul Martin camps, Liberals have been almost eerily tranquil lately. The opposition parties haven't done much to fill the acrimony vacuum, apparently stockpiling their best partisan shots for the return of Parliament. And with a health deal sealed in the early hours of Sept. 16, peace has broken out between Ottawa and the provinces. All this can't last. Politics runs on much the same principles of attraction and repulsion as electricity. Polar opposition must exist or the whole thing doesn't have a charge. It goes without saying that battles between parties will resume when the House is sitting again, and federal-provincial tensions should build by the time the PM meets the premiers to discuss equalization on Oct. 26. Predicting divisions within the minority Liberal regime is trickier, but watch for action along these fault lines when the political season gets under way in earnest with the Oct. 5 Throne Speech.

DOMESTIC PROGRAM VOTE-GETTERS VS. FOREIGN POLICY PRESTIGE-BUILDERS

Unlike U.S. presidential campaigns, in which foreign policy almost always looms large, Canadian federal elections tend to be

ILLUSTRATION BY AISLIN

resolutely focused on the home front. So it was in the race leading up to the June 28 vote, with health care dominating debate, and the Liberals also making big promises on daycare and the so-called new deal for cities. But major policy reviews in both foreign affairs and defence are under way, and should be delivered later in the fall. As well, Martin, who was at the United Nations last week, travels to Russia, France and Hungary from Oct. 8-16, and will attend summits of Asia-Pacific nations and French-speaking countries. So there will be plenty of chances for Canada's place in the world to grab the spotlight—giving Foreign Affairs Minister Pierre Pettigrew and Defence Minister Bill Graham openings to try to vie with the domestic agenda for attention.

Martin's biggest challenge could be balancing his aim of improving relations with Washington against the anti-George W. Bush sentiment running high among many Canadians. One key question: will Martin be forced to make the tough call on Canadian participation in Bush's missile shield program? The U.S. has signalled it wants a decision by the end of October. If John Kerry upsets Bush in the November election, the future of the controversial system would be in doubt—and Martin might be off the hook. Still, Graham said last week this decision gets top priority, and reportedly signalled his support for Canada participating. Beyond the missile shield question, the broader issue of how much Ottawa will boost defence spending, in part to satisfy U.S. pressure for a more robust Canadian military, will be a key question for next year's federal budget.



SOCIAL LIBERAL BIG SPENDERS VS. BUSINESS-FRIENDLY LIBERAL RESTRAINERS

Martin has committed $18 billion over six years for health. He also campaigned on spending $5 billion over five years for a national child-care program, and funnelling another $5 billion in the same period to municipalities from the federal gas tax. For the Liberals' left flank, that sort of spending is a welcome return to the activist instincts that largely went dormant during the deficit-busting 1990s. But wait—the business-oriented side of the party isn't entirely silenced. Start with Revenue Minister John McCallum, the former Royal Bank of Canada chief economist, now assigned to lead a spending review to find at least $12 billion in savings over five years. "It's not about the size of government," McCallum says. "It's about shifting resources from lower priority items to higher priorities."

Maybe so. But high priorities like health, children and cities involve Ottawa transferring money to provinces and municipalities—not running its own programs. That suggests fewer federal public servants. There's also a proposal from Public Works Minister Scott Brison for a massive sell-off of government real estate to save money. (The cost-cutting push is poisoning the atmosphere surrounding bargaining with public service unions, and many federal workers are already on strike.) And the efforts to shrink spending are not the only parts of the agenda that are of particular interest to right-tilting Liberals. Finance Minister Ralph Goodale is behind schedule on delivering a policy paper on bank mergers. Industry Minister David Emerson, a former B.C. forestry executive who was a star recruit to the Liberals for the spring election, has already said he supports letting the mergers go ahead. Adopting that policy would reverse Martin's own 1998 decision as finance minister to block them, and could incite a revolt from some left-leaning Liberal MPs.

THE FIRST hints of an anti-Martin faction have already begun to emerge. Given Liberal history, it's not surprising.

ETHICS-IN-GOVERNMENT REFORMERS VS. SPOILS-OF-POWER TRADITIONALISTS

Last winter's auditor general's report into the sponsorship affair set off a flurry of initiatives designed to clean up government. Justice John Gomery's inquiry hearings into the scandal will continue for many months. But early signs of how seriously Martin means to pursue reforms should come soon after Parliament resumes, in the form of a package of reports from Treasury Board Secretary Reg Alcock. He was assigned to come up with ways to fix parts of the system widely denounced as broken in the wake of the sponsorship revelations, ranging from the way executives and board members of Crown corporations are appointed, to what sanctions apply if public servants break financial administration rules, to how cabinet ministers and senior bureaucrats are held accountable—or not.



All this cuts to the heart of how things work in Ottawa. Martin vowed in the wake of the sponsorship scandal to be deadly serious in his response. Few Liberals would publicly disagree. But old habits about wielding power won't evaporate so easily. Many political insiders fumed about reforms, rushed in by Chrétien before he stepped down last year, that stopped parties from raising money from companies and unions. Some of the same old-school operators will not want to give up other time-honoured techniques. How far will Martin go in limiting his own patronage power to reward loyal Liberals? Will cabinet ministers accept new constraints on using government operations to partisan advantage? Such messy questions may not get publicly aired—but keeping the inevitable behind-closed-doors arguments from leaking out could be a challenge for the Prime Minister's Office.

INSIDER MARTIN LOYALISTS VS. OUTSIDER ANTI-MARTIN SNIPERS

Liberal prime ministers have long had to contend with sniping from enemies in their own party. John Turner used his networks of business contacts to spread his critique of Pierre Trudeau's economic policies. Then Turner, having succeeded Trudeau, suffered at the hands of Chrétien forces. After Chrétien got his turn in power, Martin's tight knit crew finally forced him out. So far, no coherent anti-Martin faction has materialized. But the first hints of one began to emerge in the days after the Prime Minister signed his health deal with the provinces. First, John Manley, the former finance minister who had to abandon a run for the Liberal leadership last year in the face of Martin's overwhelming lead, denounced the agreement as too costly—suggesting it might even drive the government back into deficit. Next, Maurizio Bevilacqua, a Toronto-area MP viewed as close to Martin before he failed to get a cabinet appointment, voiced concerns that the deal might have weakened the federal government.

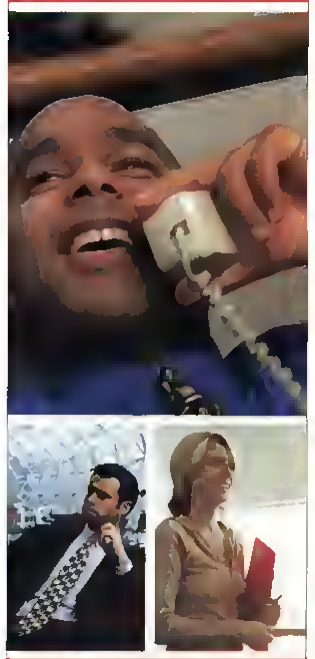
Two discontented Liberals doesn't add up to a revolt. Still, the comments suggest that Martin is not immune to the sort of internecine squabbling that plagued his predecessors. Interestingly, both Manley and Bevilacqua are influential among business-friendly, right-tilting Liberals—the part of the party once thought to be Martin's undisputed domain. Now that Martin has thrown his weight behind issues such as health and child care, his credibility with the so-called social Liberals couldn't be stronger. Yet some left-tilting elements in the party may still find him wanting. Sheila Copps is scheduled to publish her memoirs in late October. Given her very public clashes with Martin—first as he thrashed her in the leadership race, and then when she lost the nomination in her longtime Hamilton, Ont., riding to a Martin loyalist—Copps is expected to take aim at the Prime Minister during the publicity push for the book.



Martin has often said he welcomes political dissent, even from his own backbenches, and his aides insist he revels in situations that aren't "pre-cooked," where rifts and divisions have to be managed on the fly to get the outcome he wants. In that case, the coming months in Liberal politics should be right up the Prime Minister's alley.

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Jeanne has devastated Haiti, where corpses rot in floodwaters slowly receding in Gonaïves and survivors flee or wait for desperately needed bread and fresh water



BLOW BY BLOW

The fourth major storm is also the most lethal in a hurricane season that's as bad as predicted

IT WAS ONE of those times when you pray the weatherman is wrong. In August, when Hurricane Charley slammed into Florida, killing 27 and causing an estimated $9 billion in damages, meteorologists forecast there could be worse to come. Sure enough, conditions this year in the Atlantic Ocean have been just right to create particularly severe storms. Floridians had not finished cleaning up from Charley when Frances blew ashore, killing 23. Ivan arrived next, claiming at least 100 as its long looping path took it through Grenada and several U.S. Gulf states—including Florida.

And there was still worse to come. Jeanne, the most lethal storm of the season to date. Last week, Haiti bore the brunt of its fury, with more than 1,000 dead and a further 1,200 reported missing. In Gonaïves, about 110 km north of the capital Port-au-Prince, the resulting flood waters were slow to recede. Aid workers, fearing the spread of disease, began photographing the dead for later identification and burying them in mass graves. Frustrated survivors, many of them left homeless and without food or fresh water for days, complained there was insufficient international relief.

According to forecasters, September is the peak of the storm season that began in June. So as the month winds down, the storms should, too—if the weatherman is right.

(CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT) LUCAS OLENIUK/TORONTO STAR; MICHAEL LAUGHLIN/SOUTH FLORIDA SUN-SENTINEL/AP; ARIANA CUBILLOS/AP

THE MEGAMALL BET

Attention Vegas shoppers! Canada's Ghermezian brothers have *huge* plans for you.

ESKANDAR GHERMEZIAN is not happy. The head of the family-owned firm best known for building the West Edmonton Mall, the world's biggest indoor shopping centre, is in Las Vegas to inspect his company's operations in its most important new market. And behind the closed door of a meeting room, Ghermezian is making his displeasure loudly apparent.

It is 9 a.m. and the August desert sun is already beating down hard on this utterly unremarkable two-storey building, tucked behind an International House of Pancakes in one of Vegas's sprawling suburbs. The temperature is on its way to 37 degrees, and yet the atmosphere in the air conditioned offices of Triple Five Nevada Development Corp. seems more stifling than the air outside. A slight man in his mid-60s shuffling around the office in an open-necked dress shirt and a black baseball cap, Ghermezian doesn't look the part of the table-pounding taskmaster. But the grandfatherly demeanor is deceiving. When he appears in a doorway, his officers snap to attention.

Some tension is understandable, of course. You'd be edgy too if you were spending US$300 million to build an enormous shopping mall/entertainment complex in what may be the most dynamic and competitive retail market in the U.S. The Ghermezian family redefined the "megamall" with their 5.3-million-sq.-foot retail Goliath in the Alberta capital. Now they're raising the ante in Las Vegas—one of America's fastest-growing cities and the world capital of conspicuous consumption.

The project is dubbed the Great Mall of Las Vegas, and with plans calling for more than two million sq. feet, it will rival its big sisters—West Edmonton and Minnesota's Mall of America. Like them, the builders are quick to point out, it won't be just a mall but an attraction unto itself, with a skating rink, a concert venue and an elaborate luxury spa. The idea is to overwhelm the visitor. This is Las Vegas, after all, where ostentation is the norm.

"We are talking about an indoor mall not like any other indoor mall you have seen, with a Vegas kind of theme," explains Jean Marc Joveidi, senior executive vice-president at Triple Five Nevada. "We want to bring our experience from the West Edmonton Mall and Mall of America to this city."

As is his custom, Eskandar Ghermezian declined to talk about the project. But Joveidi, his designated spokesman, says a quick glance at the recent history of the Las Vegas area makes clear why Sin City is the Ghermezians' next frontier. Simply put, the city is in the midst of a development explosion. Since 1990, Clark County, which is made up almost entirely of Las Vegas and its suburbs, has seen its population more than double as the tourist industry has drawn the young and low property taxes the old. That expansion has been primarily responsible for making Nevada the fastest-growing state for 17 years running. Between 1991 and 2003, Nevada's economy grew at almost twice the average national rate. And the motor driving all that growth has been shoppers. Retail sales have jumped 65 per cent in just eight years, to US$26.1 billion last year.

Still, even in such a potent market, making the Great Mall a success won't be easy. The project is planned for the city's far northwest corner, in the heart of a thriving residential area but a 30-minute drive from Las Vegas Boulevard—the so-called Las Vegas Strip. There, within one mile of their hotels, tourists find an astounding array of retail options, with no fewer than five major malls: the Forum Shops at Caesar's Palace, Grand Canal Shoppes at the Venetian, the Desert Passage mall next to the Aladdin casino, the Mandalay Place and the mammoth Fashion Show mall right at the centre of Vegas visitor traffic. Wresting tourists' dollars away from such established outlets will be no simple task. What's more, history shows that megamalls don't always make money.

> **LIKE** the West Edmonton Mall, the Great Mall of Las Vegas will be an attraction unto itself, with a rink, a luxury spa and live music

But then, the Ghermezians are no strangers to leaps of faith, or to confrontation. Triple Five is the creation of Jacob Ghermezian, a Jewish silk rug salesman from Iran, who moved his family to Montreal in the 1960s in part to escape the rising tide of Islamic fundamentalism in his home country. A few years after arriving in Canada, he moved with his wife and four sons to Edmonton and struck it rich in real estate. By the late 1970s, the Ghermezian family had amassed the largest private portfolio of land in Alberta, and Jacob handed control of the company to his eldest son, Eskandar. Under Eskandar's leadership, Triple Five became known as a hard-nosed developer with a reputation for the dramatic, culminating in the opening of West Edmonton Mall in 1981, a sprawling complex featuring an indoor amusement park, a dolphin show and a hockey rink where the Edmonton Oilers hold practices.

As the company grew larger and more ambitious, it also grew more controversial. Twice, Triple Five was accused of bribing officials to gain support for projects. In one instance it was exonerated, and the other was settled out of court in 2002. In the

Very conspicuous consumption. Sin City's malls, like its casinos, favour themes, from the Desert Passage to the Venetian to the Forum Shops







LAURA RAUCH/AP; COURTESY OF THE VENETIAN; LENNOX MCLENDON/AP

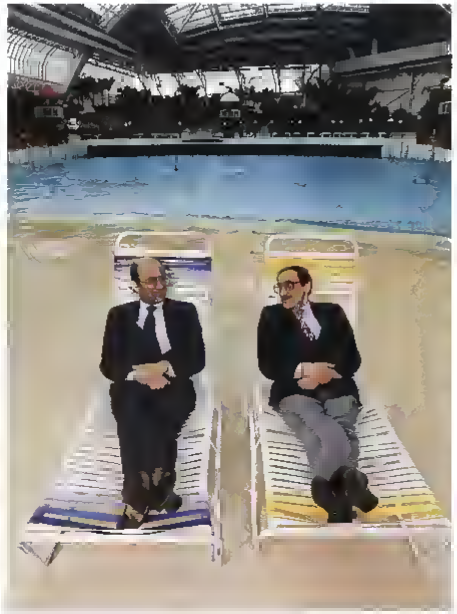
U.S., meanwhile, the firm's co-development with Simon Property Group of the Mall of America, that country's largest shopping mall, ended in a nasty court battle for control, the Ghermezians won earlier this year. But, like West Edmonton Mall in the early 1990s, the Mall of America has fallen on hard times of late. Its vacancy rate has ballooned to almost 10 per cent. Triple Five is now vowing to restore the "magic" of the megamall—something that will be vital to making the Vegas project work.

ON THE WALL of Jean Marc Joveidi's small office is an eight sq. foot aerial map detailing every inch of land in the greater Las Vegas area, with colour-coded notes denoting the company's various holdings. Those include a large outdoor shopping centre in west Las Vegas, called Boca Park, and a smaller retail development nearby. And in the top left corner of the map is a notation that simply says "The Site."

The Site seems a long way from the heart of the city, where tourists and locals can shop in both large and boutique stores while soaking up the excitement of the city. Getting people to travel some 30 km to The Site is a challenge Triple Five overcame in both of its suburban megamalls, Joveidi says. It's all about creating environments that lure people in, he says, and the company spares no expense to make that happen.

That's why, when the Nevada government banned the use of precious water supplies for outdoor fountains, the company didn't hesitate to truck water in from out of state so the fountains at Boca Park wouldn't run dry. "People probably think we're crazy to spend that on water," says Joveidi. "But when you're driving through the desert and you see green and you see water, subconsciously you think, this is somewhere that I want to park and stay."

No one is more enthusiastic about Triple Five's plans than the city's tourism officials. Fast as Las Vegas has grown, its prosperity remains closely tied to the gaming industry. Retail can help diversify the economy, explains Erika Yowell, manager at the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority. "Fifteen years ago there were only two states in which you could engage in gambling. Today there is some form of legalized gambling in 48 of 50 states. If people are just interested in gambling, they don't have to come to Las Vegas."



Eskandar (left) and Nader Ghermezian at the West Edmonton Mall, still the world's biggest

They will keep coming, however, if the city can provide a broad range of attractions, she says. That's why tourism officials have begun aggressively marketing Vegas as a destination for so-called "shoppertainment"-themed malls featuring such embellishments as the marble columns and elaborate statues of the Forum Shops, or the gondola rides of the Canal Shoppes—or the sheer size and elegant detailing envisioned for the Great Mall. "When you look at vacation spending, shopping is a huge part," Yowell says. "Our research shows people spend more on shopping when they're vacationing here than they do on sightseeing and shows combined."

WHEN Nevada banned the use of precious water in outdoor fountains, the Ghermezians trucked it in from out of state

But with legalized gambling spreading around the world, and with the threat of terrorist attacks hanging over travel, one question haunts almost everyone in Las Vegas: what if all that tourist traffic dried up? This year, a record 37 million people are expected to visit the city—15 times the population of Toronto. Any sudden drop in the flow of tourists would have vast and devastating economic consequences.

"The risk is that the bottom falls out of the southern Nevada economy," says Jeremy Aguero, principal analyst with Applied Analysis, a Vegas-based economic consulting firm. "With any rapid rise comes the potential for rapid decline, and our economy is extremely narrow. Many people who live here are dependent, directly or indirectly, on the gaming industry. If something were to happen to it, be it terrorism or competition or regulation, it'd ripple through the economy."

The Triple Five brass are well aware of such worries, but on this sweltering August day, Joveidi has more immediate concerns than the sustainability of the Vegas boom. He has an angry boss to contend with. After just 15 minutes, Ghermezian summons Joveidi from a meeting with a reporter. When Joveidi returns, he politely cuts the discussion short. "I'm sorry," he says, "but I have to attend to an emergency situation." On the way out, he dismisses all the risks with a calm confidence. The tourists will keep coming, the city will keep growing, and the Great Mall of Las Vegas will be a glitzy addition to the city's sparkling landscape. (Still, a few weeks later, the company said the mall may end up being smaller than two million sq. feet.) "For the next 15 years, with the demographic growth that's happening, there is no overwhelming this market," Joveidi says. "Our history speaks for itself. Whatever we do, it becomes the talk of the town." M

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THE SCANDAL THAT ISN'T

Canada's mutual fund industry reels from a needless crackdown

ELIOT SPITZER'S ghost has finally overstayed its welcome.

It's not that we're not grateful for its appearance, mind you. The ambitious New York attorney general has cast a long and benevolent shadow across Canada's financial markets over the past couple of years, despite having no official regulatory role in this country. Through his various public crusades against Wall Street's transgressions, Spitzer's spirit of reform has invigorated a stagnant and docile regulatory regime, and generally made North America a safer place for small investors.

But all crusades eventually go too far, and the latest regulatory crackdown by the Ontario Securities Commission shows things are getting chilly here in Spitzer's shadow. The OSC, this country's biggest and most important market regulator, announced last week that it had sent notices to four Canadian mutual fund firms—CI Fund Management, AGF Funds, Investors Group and AIC Ltd.—saying it's considering regulatory charges against them for allegedly allowing improper trading in their funds.

The case has already evoked screaming headlines in the business press, mirroring the reception given to the industry-wide reckoning that's unfolded in the United States over the past year. And if that history is any guide, Canada's mutual fund investors will soon wish the lid had been left on this Pandora's box. Chances are, the cure will be worse than the disease, because the more you learn about this so-called scandal, the more you wonder if it is worth the angst involved in exposing it.

There are two separate issues that have raised the ire of market regulators, and though they're often lumped together, they're very different. The first is what's known as "late trading." It involves schemes in which fund firms allow a handful of large investors to make trades after markets have closed. Those investors can act on information that the rest of us can't. This is both illegal and unethical, and has led to more than US$2 billion in penalties levied against big U.S. fund firms.

After almost a year of looking for evidence of similar abuses in Canada, the OSC found nothing. Zilch. Nada. What it did find is evidence of a far more common and arcane issue known as "market timing." These cases involve investors who jump rapidly from fund to fund, trying to lock in gains from short-term movements in overseas markets. Most mutual fund companies prohibit this kind of trading because it drives up costs to the fund and, at least theoretically, dilutes profits for long-term fund holders.

Compared to late trading, market timing is a misdemeanour at worst. For one thing, market timing is not illegal. The only reason it's an issue at all is because most fund companies claim to prohibit such trading, but some allegedly failed to enforce those prohibitions. That failure appears to have created marginally lower returns for long-term fund holders, but nobody knows how much money was siphoned off this way. Thousands? Millions? Tens of millions?

CHANCES are the cure will be worse than the disease. The fund companies can expect a public relations firestorm, and that will have serious implications for investors.

Furthermore, it appears market timing was extremely rare in Canada. The OSC started what it calls its "most extensive review ever undertaken" last November, contacting 105 fund companies. It then requested more detailed information from 31 firms. From there, it narrowed the probe to seven for intensive review, during which four produced evidence of rapid trading contrary to the funds' own rules. The OSC reviewed "millions of trades in thousands of accounts" and came up with four possible offenders from a pool of 105 suspects—not exactly a rampant problem consuming the savings of widows and orphans everywhere.

According to the OSC, this questionable trading activity was snuffed out by the mere suggestion of closer scrutiny. In the late summer of 2003, right around the time regulators announced their crackdown, market timing trades stopped abruptly. The OSC found no evidence that any such schemes are still in operation. In the words of David Brown, chairman of the OSC, "We don't think investors should be concerned about the stability of their assets."

So problem solved, right? Not so fast.

Judging from the fallout suffered by the U.S. industry, the targeted Canadian fund companies can expect a public relations firestorm, and that may have serious implications for investors as well. If fund holders start dumping units based on the perception that they've been cheated, funds will have to sell investments to satisfy redemptions. That in turn could sink the value of fund units, creating a self-feeding spiral for the companies affected.

To force out the market timers, most fund companies are now imposing short-term-trading fees on any investors who withdraw or transfer their funds within a few days of purchase. Rather than monitoring trades and imposing penalties only where there is an established pattern of market timing, the funds have decided, in effect, to treat all their clients like potential trading abusers. So much for the free flow of capital and people's right to control their own money.

All this fuss for the sake of stopping an infraction that isn't illegal, was extremely rare, and had an unquantifiable impact on investors. Two years ago, the average mutual fund buyer had never heard of market timing. It took this long to find out that what they didn't know wasn't hurting them. M

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WHAT ABOUT THE KIDS?

Politicians are failing children, especially those with special needs

IMAGINE THE STRESSES of raising an autistic child. In the most severe cases of autism, children shut out the world around them, behave in ritualistic ways and communicate through shrieks and screams. Now imagine taking on the added financial and personal strain of launching a legal battle against a school board and/or provincial education officials. Yet that's what hundreds of Canadian parents feel they must do. At any given time in this country, there are more than 100 lawsuits in the courts filed by parents of autistic children.

For the most part, the suits aim to force provinces to offer, through the school system, a variety of intensive therapies that have proven highly successful in helping kids with autism, a spectrum of neurological disorders with symptoms ranging from social aloofness to profound exile from the world. The lawsuits, based on the Charter, contend that all children have an equal right to education, and that special therapy is essential to an autistic child's ability to learn. Yet school boards have usually insisted such treatment is beyond their mandate: autism therapy, they stress, falls under the purview of the health care system. Governments also contend that current treatments are most effective with infants and toddlers (however, studies reveal an impressive track record with school-age kids as well). One case, a B.C. court decision requiring that province to provide therapy for 23 autistic children, is currently before the Supreme Court of Canada.

But an unusual Toronto-area case is shifting the terrain of legal debate by taking the battle into a child-welfare court. In midsummer, the Durham Children's Aid Society applied to renew a court order allowing it to monitor two autistic brothers, aged 7 and 9. The stressed-out parents, social workers suspected, were exposing the boys to harmful and abusive arguments. However, the couple turned the tables and replied to the CAS application by arguing the school board and the government of Ontario are guilty of neglect by failing to provide a suitable program. In a landmark ruling this month, Superior Court Justice David Salmers allowed the case to proceed to trial. If his decision survives an appeal, it will be the first time that a Canadian school board is the subject of a child welfare hearing—and it will mean that schools deemed neglectful or abusive could, like parents, come under the watch of child welfare agencies. In the past, says the parents' lawyer, Jeffery Wilson, "child welfare law stopped at the doorsteps of the school. Education was seen as somebody else's bailiwick."

The plaintiffs in the Charter and child-welfare cases share the same goal: they want schools and, by extension, the government to provide their children with the optimal learning environment. But the Durham case recasts the terms of debate. Rather than an abstract principle of equality, the practical and pressing question of what's in a child's best interest will guide the judge's decision. Although it arises out of anomalous circumstances and Wilson doesn't expect the trial's outcome to affect the constitutional challenges now in process, the Durham case clearly sets out the dilemma at the heart of all these challenges: who is responsible for ensuring that a child's needs are met? It also, sadly, points to how far we are from any resolution to that question.

A COURT CASE involving autistic brothers highlights the fact no one has ultimate responsibility for Canada's youngsters

North Americans have long been ambivalent about kids: we have plenty of public programs geared to various aspects of their development, but we're reluctant to commit to an overall vision. The patchwork of child-care policies across the country, and the 20-year dickering over a national program, are prime indicators of our ambivalence. So is the fact that, in the case of autistic children, school boards are only too ready to pass the buck—even though schools have long been about more than mere education. Breakfast and after-school programs, visiting public-health professionals, extracurricular activities and, of course, special education itself, all testify to the broad social welfare role schools already play.

Never, in fact, is the adage "it takes a village to raise a child" more true than in the case of special-needs kids. And it's no coincidence that these cases come at a time when inclusion (to use the term *du jour* for integration) is increasingly promoted and applauded. The Autism Society of Canada, the Canadian Association for Community Living and the Canadian Mental Health Association all uphold inclusion as an educational and social policy. A spate of research indicating that children generally—though not universally—fare worse socially and academically when they're segregated into special-education classes has helped push boards across the country to open regular classrooms to students with disabilities. (Of course, the commitment is far from fully played out, and in practice, it's the physically disabled who benefit the most, with 85 per cent fully included in regular classrooms compared to only 40 per cent of students with intellectual disabilities.)

Still, the change in mindset from a generation ago—when the mentally disabled were deemed "defectives" and regularly sent to live, and be schooled, in large, impersonal provincial facilities—is remarkable. In fact, last month Ontario's ministry of community and social services announced plans to close the province's three remaining regional centres for the developmentally disabled by 2009 (13 have been shut since the late 1980s). "We will complete a long-standing journey from an institution-based service system for people with developmental disabilities to a community-based system that promotes inclusion, independence and choice," proclaimed minister Sandra Pupatello as she committed up to $110 million over the next four years for group homes and other measures to support the 1,000 residents making the transition to life in and among the general populace. Ontario joins B.C. and Newfoundland in closing the book on segregated living, and some other provinces intend to follow suit.

The parents of autistic children, then, are simply in sync with the times when they seek help shouldering a responsibility that can be overwhelming on the best of days. And public schools, whether they like it or not, are our modern-day village squares, certainly for parents of school-aged kids. They are *the* daily point of contact for parents with each other, as well as with other concerned adults who have more than a passing acquaintance with their kids.

Of course, resource-strapped schools need funding to take on an expanded mandate. They claim, with justification, that they can't afford to deliver the 20 plus hours a week needed for effective autism therapy, which usually involves repetition and rewards. Some provinces are making amends. Nova Scotia hired 52 new resource teachers in 2003, and Ontario recently committed $250 million for special education—essential but inadequate steps to restoring budgets that were slashed in the 1990s.

But funding alone isn't enough. If we're to take our collective responsibility for children's welfare seriously, we need to demand that governments do something they seem loath to do: take some initiative. That's the only way to avoid the haphazard approach schools now have to special education and other programs. A truly coordinated children's services system that looks out for youngsters' best interests in health, education and welfare could be run most effectively within the school system.

That's why asking who's responsible, as the Durham case does, is so compelling. The trouble is, courts are hardly a forum for coming to a collective, village-style resolution. They tend to pit the responsible adults involved against each other, and to encourage precisely the pass-the-buck mentality that's at the core of the dilemma. If governments showed some political will, parents wouldn't be backed into using the courts, and the terrain could be established for a rational, timely approach to ensuring every kid's needs are met. Then, perhaps, all those parents currently in court would have a little more time and energy for the kids.

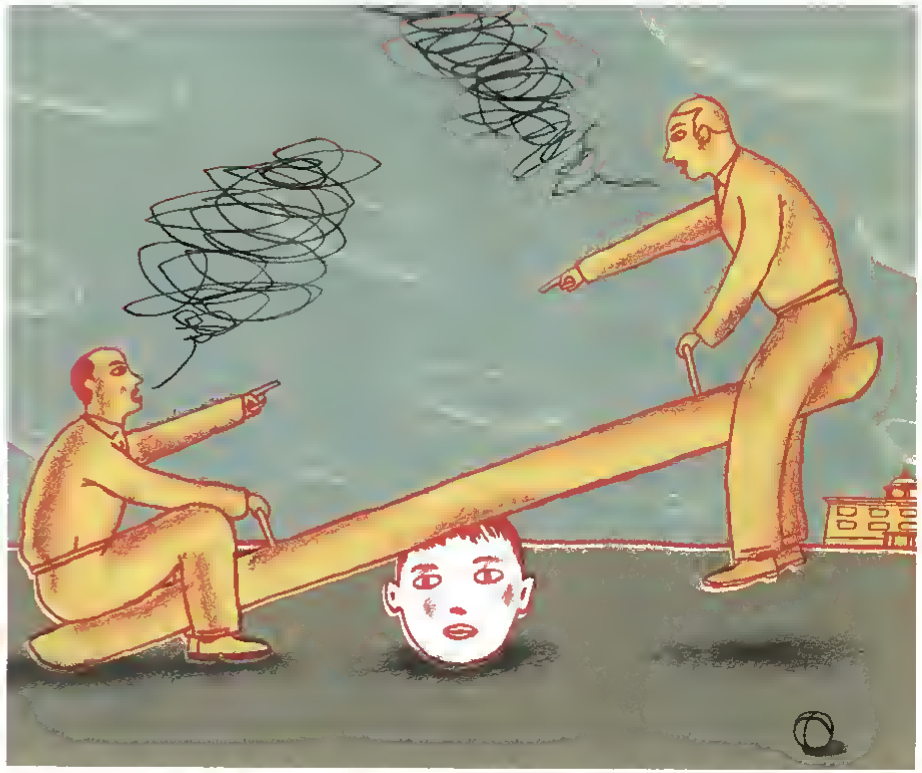
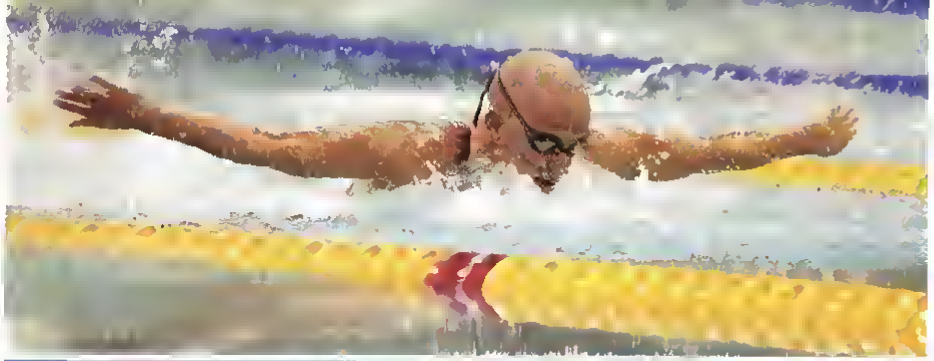
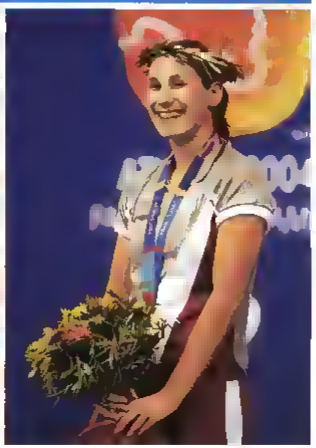


ILLUSTRATION BY CHRISTIAN NORTHEAST



Huot (above) and Cote (below right) led the gold rush with four each, while Clark set a world record in winning the 100-m sprint





Paralympics | BY JAMES DEACON

DISCOVERING GOLD

After a slow start, Canadian athletes find their top-of-the-podium form in Athens

A LOT WAS expected of Kirby Cote at the Paralympic Games. The 20-year-old swimmer from Winnipeg arrived in Athens as one of Canada's top medal hopes. But results don't always follow expectations at major meets, so she was thrilled last week when her first races went according to plan. Going into the final weekend of the Games, she had captured four gold medals, including the women's 100-m freestyle for the visually impaired in a personal best time of 1:01.74. And her top event, the 200-m individual medley, was still to come. "I'm just following all the strategies set out by my coach," said Cote after the 100 free, "and it's working out well."

With two days of competitions left, Canadians had won 40 medals, including 15 gold, to sit in sixth place among 136 countries competing at the Games, well behind the front-running Chinese. Four of Canada's gold medals came from swimmer Benoit Huot, 20, of St-Hubert, Que., who like Cote was entered in seven events. Fellow swimmers Anne Polinaro, 25, of Toronto and Walter Wu, 32, of Richmond, B.C., took gold in the women's 100 freestyle and men's 400 freestyle for the visually impaired, respectively. On the track, meanwhile, Chantal Petitclerc of Montreal captured the women's 100-, 800- and 1,500-m wheelchair races for paraplegics. And Chelsea Clark of Mississauga, Ont., set a world record in winning the women's 100-m sprint for athletes with cerebral palsy. M

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JEAN BAPTISTE BENAVENT/CANADIAN PARALYMPIC COMMITTEE/CP

History | BY BRIAN BERGMAN

BRIGHT'S REVENGE

A brutal attack on a black American footballer led to a storied CFL career

JOHNNY BRIGHT, a halfback at Iowa's Drake University, was the leading rusher in U.S. college football when he ran onto Lewis Field in Stillwater, Okla., on Oct. 21, 1951, to play against Oklahoma A&M. For days, rumours flew that the all-white Oklahoma squad considered Bright, who was black, a "marked man." On Drake's first offensive scrimmage, A&M end Wilbanks Smith slammed Bright in the face with his fist well behind the play, fracturing his jaw (football helmets did not yet have face masks). Bright somehow continued and, on the next play, he threw a 61-yard touchdown pass. Smith attacked again, this time with a forearm blow that sent Bright out of the game for good.

The incident might have been forgotten if two photographers, John Robinson and Don Ultang, hadn't captured it on film. Published by the Des Moines Register and Life magazine, the duo's photos earned them a Pulitzer Prize and provoked a national uproar over what the New York Times called "one of the ugliest racial incidents in college sports history." The gridiron assault also helped convince one of America's top footballers to head north for what would become a storied career in the Canadian Football League.

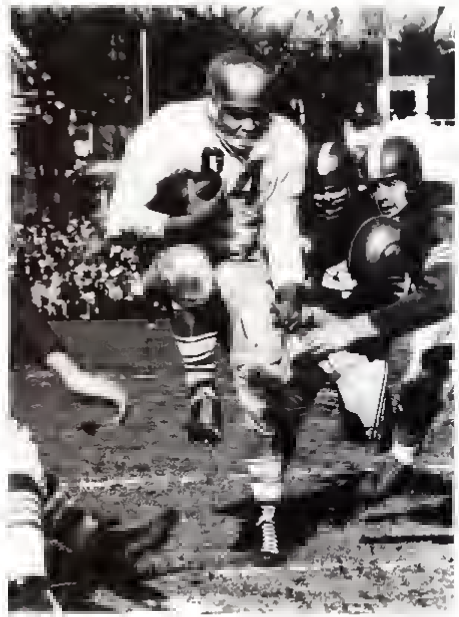
Three months after the Oklahoma outrage, the NFL Philadelphia Eagles made Bright a first-round draft choice. Had he accepted, Bright would have become the team's first black player (the National Football League's colour barrier came down just six years earlier). Instead, Bright signed with the Calgary Stampeders, making him the first top-round NFL draft pick to opt instead to play in Canada. Partly, it was about money. hard as it is to imagine now, many players then earned more in the CFL than the NFL. But Bright was also clearly rattled by his experience at Lewis Field. "There was a tremendous influx of [white] southern players into the NFL at that time," Bright later said, "and I didn't know what kind of treatment to expect."

After two injury-plagued seasons in Calgary, Bright joined the Edmonton Eskimos. He became an instant star, helping lead the team to its fabled string of Grey Cup victories in 1954, 1955 and 1956. By the time he retired in 1964, Brighr had rushed for 10,909 yards—then a CFL record that, in the intervening 40 years, has been exceeded by only two players, George Reed and Mike Pringle. Bright still remains tied with Reed for most career playoff touchdowns (19) and holds the all-time record for most yards rushed in a Grey Cup game (171, in the Eskimos' 1956 victory over the Montreal Alouettes).

After he retired, Bright remained in Edmonton where he became a highly respected teacher, junior high school principal and basketball coach. In 1983, the father of three underwent minor knee surgery. While anesthetized, Bright suffered cardiac arrest and could not be revived. He was 53. The city later renamed a football field after him, and the Edmonton Journal annually hands out Johnny Bright awards to high school athletes who embody his commitment to academics, athletics and the community.

Friends and colleagues remember Bright as a modest and private man who never discussed the ugly incident that changed the course of his career. "He wouldn't mention it at all," says Bob Dean, a place-kicker for the Eskimos in the 1950s, who remained friends with Bright until his death. Now 74, Dean says Bright and other black players who came from the U.S. around the same time indicated "they enjoyed life here because people treated them with respect." Yet, he describes Bright as a driven man. "Being black and living in a white man's world," says Dean, "John felt he had to be perfect in everything he did."

Perhaps one of the most fitting tributes to Bright came in a 1999 retrospective by Terry Hersom, sports editor of Iowa's Sioux City Journal. "He led the CFL in rushing in front of cheering Canadian throngs less encumbered by ignorant hatred that our country has still not entirely purged," wrote Hersom. "Those who know the story well have an obligation to pass it on. Those who don't will be better just for listening." M



Bright helped carry the Eskimos to three Grey Cups in the 1950s

EDMONTON JOURNAL

LIES, SECRETS, CONUNDRUMS

Most characters in Canada's fall fiction chase the ideal in all the wrong places

"IF I HAVE LEARNED anything in this lifetime, Isaac, it is this—one should never try to realize the ideal, but find the ideal in the real." So writes an elderly Giacomo Casanova to a friend in Susan Swan's new novel, *What Casanova Told Me*. It's sound advice for anyone in an age of mindless fundamentalism—but most of the characters in this fall's Canadian fiction spectacularly fail to follow it. From Swan's Puritan girl on the run from an arranged marriage to the middle-aged protagonist of Richard Wright's *Adultery*, Michael Winter's expat painter in *The Big Why*, the pet owners in Helen Humphreys' *Wild Dogs* and—above all—the precocious girl geniuses in Paul Anderson's *Hunger's Brides*, they all kick hard against the traces. Only the conflicted narrator of Wayson Choy's *All That Matters* strives for the ideal in the real.

A new book from Choy is an event. His writing has a quiet integrity and an exquisite grace that can electrify readers—when they can get it, that is. Despite having one of his earliest efforts chosen for *The Best American Short Stories of 1962*, Choy, now 65, published only four pieces of short fiction in the following three decades. During that time, he told *Maclean's* in a 1996 interview, he felt that writing was "so hard, and I don't have anything to say." What seemed then a simple lack of confidence reads in retrospect like a statement of fact. For when Choy published his first novel, *The Jade Peony*, in 1995, he broke the silence of one of Canada's most reticent immigrant communities—and loosened the moorings of his own life.

His recreation of Vancouver's pre-war Chinatown through the eyes of three children—mystified witnesses to the adult world—stirred memories of the days when a virulent racism shut off further immigration to a population desperately short of women. The use of false papers to fool the "big-nose immigration demons" was common.

Writing *is* hard, especially for a writer like Choy, whose source material is rife with secrets his family and community preferred to keep hidden. In fact, after *The Jade Peony* appeared, a message from an older Chinese woman led Choy to learn, at age 56, that he had been adopted. That prompted Choy to write the exquisite *Paper Shadows* (1999), one of the finest memoirs ever penned by a Canadian. And now, with **All That Matters**, Choy has returned to familiar territory. This time the fictional child looking back is the Chen family's First Son, Kiam Kim, older brother to the children of *The Jade Peony*. Growing up in the same atmosphere of secrecy, Kiam Kim is an observer as acute—and innocent—as his siblings. As in his previous books, Choy's handling of childhood memory is dazzling. However perfect their recall of certain moments, his kids never invest them with an adult portentousness; full awareness of their significance remains elusive even after they grow up.

Kiam Kim is torn between Chinese family tradition and the New World. First Son thinks too much, or so his relatives say, in a culture that believes toeing the line is the key to survival. When the children gather before their grandmother, the incandescent Poh-Poh, to listen to the tales of Old China that bind the family to its roots, the tension within Kiam Kim becomes overwhelming. So too does the subtle resonance of Choy's writing. *All That Matters* is a beautiful novel.

Richard Wright's 2001 novel, *Clara Callan*, vastly expanded his small but devoted readership, built up over eight previous books, as he swept the Giller Prize, the Governor General's Award and the Trillium (best Ontario book) for his Depression-era tale of two sisters. That means his new novel, **Adultery**, carries a heavy freight of expectations. But lightning may not strike twice for the author. The new novel is quintessential Wright, marked by smooth craftsmanship and understated prose. Daniel Fielding, 55, a senior book editor, loves his life and his family, but has a desultory fling with a younger colleague while on a business trip. She soon exits the story, though, and in a fashion that exposes Fielding's infidelity for all the world to see.

So why did he stray? Besides the short answer—opportunity knocked—Wright flicks at the past, at the mysterious imprint our parents leave upon us. (Fielding describes, in a lovely phrase that captures so many father-son relationships, chatting happily with his dad about "many things, none of which he could recall.") *Adultery*, however, is not really about *why*, but about facing the moment, that never-to-be-put-right-again instant of "the sniper's bullet, the house ablaze, the abducted child." Fielding has reserves of courage that keep him doggedly trying to repair the harm he's caused. But he has none of Clara Callan's élan, and *Adultery*, taut and austere as it is, hasn't the warmth of the earlier novel.

There's heat aplenty in Helen Humphreys' fourth novel, **Wild Dogs**, despite its occasionally choppy 185 pages. And the book can be as stylized as a Kabuki performance: six pet owners gather nightly on the edge of a small city, trying to call back their dogs from the wild pack they've joined. The cliché says owners and dogs begin to look alike—these canines actually embody their owners' personalities and symbolize the damaged humans' displaced capacity for yearning, passion and trust. One owner is mentally handicapped, and thus free of civilized repression, unsurprisingly, she goes feral herself.

Yet there is a powerful, appealing story here, thanks to Alice, the primary narrator. She has fallen redemptively, if heartbreakingly, in love with one of the other owners, wildlife biologist Rachel. Even though the rise and fall of the affair is brutally hard on her, Alice's willingness to love makes her the least hurt of the bereft humans, the one with the best chance at happiness. Similarly, her lover's pet—not a dog at all, but a wolf raised from a cub—



Choy's protagonist is torn between Chinese tradition and the New World

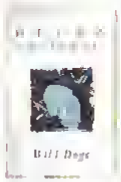
PHOTOGRAPH BY SANDY NICHOLSON



ALL THAT MATTERS
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$35.95



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Richard Wright
HarperCollins
$32.95



WILD DOGS
Helen Humphreys
HarperCollins
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HUNGER'S BRIDES
Paul Anderson
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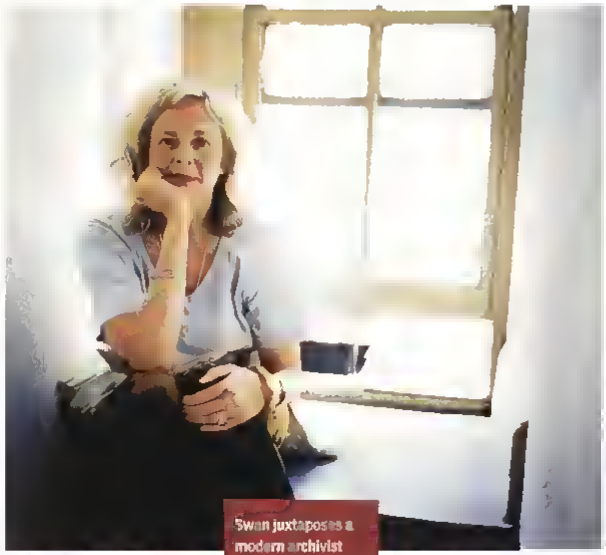
signifies how Rachel is not capable of trust

There's room to spare for seven Helen Humphreys novels in Paul Anderson's 1,354-page tour-de-force, **Hunger's Brides**. It's a difficult text, even to describe. Ranging seamlessly between the 17th century and now, *Hunger's Brides* details the parallel lives of two child prodigies, Sor (Sister) Juana Inés de la Cruz, the greatest Spanish-language poet of her era, and the unstable Beulah Limosneros, a Calgary scholar obsessed with the Mexican Juana, who entered a convent at 19 and eventually took a vow of silence. Beulah's former supervisor (and one time lover) Don Gregory narrates the tale, piecing it together from notes he snatched from Beulah's apartment after a beating left her in a coma.

And that's just the starting point for a novel that draws on Inquisitorial records, Spanish accounts of Aztec blood sacrifices, and theological disputes, to ask why genius would silence itself. Anderson undermines the basic assumptions of historical fiction by constantly pointing out the threads linking the Baroque age to the 20th century, like the remarkably similar heresy trials held in Soviet Russia and Colonial Mexico. And by slyly reminding readers, through Gregory's mocking footnotes, that people in the past sounded fully modern to themselves, just as we will sound antiquated to future generations. That was a lesson he had to learn himself from Beulah, the master taught by the student. "Your Postmodern, Dr. Gregory, is just the Baroque, with its blood sucked out." There's no doubting the meat on the bones of *Hunger's Brides*, the brilliance of its ideas and composition, but it's no easy read.

In contrast, Susan Swan's **What Casanova Told Me**, another parallel-track historical novel, easily engages the reader. Many will be irritated by the main modern character, Luce Adams, a Toronto archivist—an easy metaphor for dusty and dried up—who can't hold a candle to her robust 18th-century Yankee forebear, Asked For Adams. But Swan provides excellent reason for Luce's old-maidish ways: she spent her childhood playing housewife for her mother, a beloved feminist academic. More important, Luce represents our era, at once more skeptical and more fearful than Asked For's.

The novel opens with Luce heading to Europe for a memorial service for her mother. She carries with her, as a loan to a Venetian museum, Adams family treasures: her ancestor's journal from 1797, when she was in



Swan juxtaposes a modern archivist and her 18th-century forebear

Venice with her father, and letters written to her by Giacomo Casanova. Asked For emerges in all her charm, a very tall 25 year-old with a propensity for noting moral Lessons Learned, and an unfortunate relationship with her body, which she refers to as My Poor Friend. But Casanova knows the cure for that. Rather than returning home to a loveless marriage, Asked For runs away with the elderly rake—Casanova was 72 in 1797—and the two embark on a wonderfully evoked love affair. Swan might have been wiser not to solve the mystery at the heart of her story (what happened to Asked For after her last journal entry). But the author was surely right to make Luce more alive after her journey. Or what's the point of leaving home?



WHAT CASANOVA TOLD ME
Susan Swan Knopf
$34.95



THE BIG WHY
Michael Winter
Anansi
$36

As Swan expresses Casanova's fourth principle of travel: "What you desire always awaits you if you are brave enough to recognize it."

Both the real Rockwell Kent—the noted American artist (1882-1971)—and the fake one in Michael Winter's **The Big Why** would have bought into that. Winter's previous novel, *This All Happened*, featured an author working on a historical novel about Kent, who left New York for Newfoundland in 1914. And now Winter has written that book, in the form of a very amusing faux memoir. Famed Newfoundland explorer Bob Bartlett is in it too, continuing the fictional run that last saw him in Wayne Johnston's *The Navigator of New York*.

Kent is a rampaging egotist (at least in the opinion of his elderly self looking back), and only intermittently self-aware. Ignoring what he calls an "inner hunch," young Rockwell decides monogamy is a good thing, and tries to be faithful to his wife, even while lusting after everyone in sight. But striving to lead your life by ideals is impossible, the memoirist declares, when you don't know the one, right question about the meaning of life. And it's only in a drunken 1946 conversation with Bartlett that the two old friends, in a novel that's almost as profound as it is witty, finally decide on the big why. M

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DO NOT WRITE GENTLY

Alice Munro's new tales are as fierce as ever



In her hands, the smallest moments contain the central truths of a lifetime

IT'S A BUSY Monday morning and publisher Douglas Gibson is on the phone puzzling over why Juliet, a seemingly devoted single mother, has been treated so shockingly by her grown daughter. "It's the mounting horror of it all," he muses, "and yet if you go back and look at the way Juliet dealt with her own mother . . ." There is a slightly embarrassed laugh as both Gibson and his caller realize they are not actually talking about real people but about characters in a story in Runaway, the new collection by Alice Munro. They might as well be real, though. Like all of Munro's previous, award-winning short story collections—which prompted The Atlantic Monthly to call her "the living writer most likely to be read in 100 years"—Runaway is filled with memorable, if increasingly eccentric, characters whose lives unfold in astonishing ways.

Juliet, who inhabits a triptych of stories ("Chance," "Soon" and "Silence") in the book, is a young classics teacher with some of the hallmarks of Munro's earlier heroines. She's the smartest girl in a small town, and her intelligence sticks out like a "limp or an extra thumb." Juliet moves away, takes a huge chance on love after meeting a man on a train and, when she visits home, unmarried with a small daughter, rails at the narrow-mindedness that causes her parents to suggest she disembark one town over so that no one will see her just yet. "You don't realize just how stupid this is and what a disgusting place this is to live in," she says.

In these often discomfiting stories, three of which have never been published before (the author's work usually appears first in The New Yorker), Munro's heroines are as varied as Carla, a young, emotionally abused wife who, in the title story's climate of increasing menace, attempts to run away, and Lauren, the 14-year-old girl in "Trespasses," who is commandeered by an odd hotel clerk who believes she has a special claim on her. Then there is Robin in "Tricks," a single woman who takes a train once a year to Stratford to see a Shakespeare play. Robin eats dinner alone afterward, and "those few hours filled her with an assurance that the life she was going back to, which seemed so makeshift and unsatisfactory, was only temporary and could easily be put up with. And there was a radiance behind it . . . expressed by the sunlight seen through the train windows."

Robin gets caught up in her own tragicomic Shakespearean plot, and here Munro takes curious chances with a narrative twist that strains credulity until you think, well, if Shakespeare could use this device why can't Munro? The slightly gimmicky ending pales anyway beside the emotion clutching at the gut, the lost opportunity for love.

Alice Munro is 73 now, and after a serious heart operation two years ago, she's writing "faster than ever," says Gibson, her long-time editor. No gentling has taken place, no falling down in fierceness. If anything, there's a defiance to her insights. In "Powers," a woman named Nancy inwardly mocks men who characterize life as "indeed a bumpy road, but misfortunes had pointed the way to better things, lessons were learned and without a doubt joy came in the morning." In Munro's fictional morning, you're likely to find the aftermath of a revelatory dream that turns everything to "soot and soft ash," or a painfully unresolved mother-daughter mess, or something unmentionable hovering just beyond the landscape of daily life.

But Munro is not one bit bleak; she is steadfast, lucid, occasionally funny and thrillingly honest. An elderly woman, startled by her reflection in a window, stares at the "angry looking, wrinkled-up almost teary" stranger before her and then "promptly began to cast around for hope, as if there were not a minute to lose." In Alice Munro's hands, the smallest moments contain the central truths of a lifetime, in which disaster, honesty and hope are teased out as if indeed there was not a minute to lose. M

BEREK SHAPTON

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IN THE KEY OF LIFE

A fighter takes her show on the back roads again



Undaunted by cancer, Fialkowska is once more onstage and in small-town Canada

FROM THE AGE of 4 you spend hours at the piano perfecting the classics. By 25, you're selling out concerts on both sides of the Atlantic. For the next quarter-century, critics consider you one of the world's greatest musicians. Then one day in January 2002, doctors discover a highly aggressive malignant tumour in your upper left arm, forcing you to step back from the instrument you love. A paralyzing blow for most people. But not for Janina Fialkowska. "Sometimes I made myself think that my playing wouldn't come back," says Fialkowska, 53. "I'd get upset for a few seconds, but always remained optimistic. I knew I'd play again. Guess I'm just stubborn."

Not to mention lucky, and incredibly passionate about her art—something she'd already demonstrated by founding Piano Six, now expanded and being relaunched this fall as Encore Six, to send musicians to small-town Canada. After months of radiation to shrink the tumour, surgery to remove the growth left the Montreal-born virtuoso unable to raise her hand to the keyboard. So she taught herself how to play music written for the left hand, using only her right. Eight months later, a muscle from her back was transplanted into her limp left arm. "Five months after the second surgery I was able to hold my hand to the keyboard, but could only move it a short distance," recalls Fialkowska, who splits her time between homes she and her husband, German impresario Harry Oesterle, own in Weston, Conn., Augsburg, Germany, and Montreal. "I had to order my hand down the keyboard, but within two weeks was playing Chopin. It took six months of building up muscle memory to really play, but at that moment I knew I was back."

Her recovery—all the more miraculous given that doctors believed she'd never play professionally again—was complete last spring when Fialkowska performed at Toronto's George Weston Recital Hall. "I certainly worked my tear ducts at rehearsal," says the one-time protege of the legendary Artur Rubinstein. "That night was sheer joy." Except for having to lean slightly to her left to reach all the keys, little in her playing has changed. The only major difference is fatigue. "I used to practise six hours a day and now only do about three," she says. "Chopin told his students not to work more than three hours a day because the brain can't take it. I practise more in my head now. And my husband and I power walk every morning. I've never been in such great shape."

> **'JUST** like people should be able to see a Rembrandt at a museum, they should be able to enjoy classical music'

Physical fitness isn't the only positive outcome of her illness. The two years of recovery also allowed Fialkowska to reorganize Piano Six, the music program she started in 1994 with the help of five other world-class domestic musicians. The not-for-profit organization funds artist trips to small Canadian towns and cities and rural communities to introduce school kids and adults to classical music through workshops, master classes and concerts. "Just like people should be able to walk into a museum and look at a Rembrandt," says Fialkowska, "they should be able to enjoy classical music."

Pianist Jon Kimura Parker was the first musician Fialkowska contacted a decade ago with her idea. "Piano Six made me come alive as a musician in a way unique to all other experiences," says the Vancouver native, who teaches at Houston's Rice University. "The most memorable concerts I've given have been at the Berlin Philharmonie, my first time at Carnegie Hall, and in Iqaluit. The trip to Baffin Island was an incredible sharing of music. At one point the entire gym of kids sang their school song to me."

Fialkowska kicks off Encore Six this month in the Maritimes and hopes that her team—now up to 21 artists, not all pianists—will visit more than 100 places in 2005. "The concerts are the scariest to do because it's such a huge responsibility," she says. "This is the first time these kids are hearing someone like Chopin or Bach. It may be the most important thing I've done in my entire life." M

COURTESY OF THE STUDY

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WHO NEEDS PROVINCES?

Let's get rid of them. Just think of all the paperwork we'd eliminate, too.

A THOUGHT OCCURRED to me as I crossed the border into Manitoba from Ontario at about the 20-hour mark of a solo drive that took me from just outside Owen Sound, Ont., to Beaverlodge, Alta. If you've never had the pleasure of driving across the north side of Lake Superior, let me tell you that, as beautiful as the scenery is, it eventually seems like the backdrop from a Flintstones cartoon, cycling over and over until you begin to question the accuracy of your odometer. So when the "Welcome to Ontario" sign flashed in the rear view mirror and the "Welcome to Manitoba" sign blurred by in my periphery, I was left with an overwhelming feeling of "Oh. Is that it?"

My intention here is not to pick on either Ontario or Manitoba. Indeed, there are few border crossings the average Canadian will make in a lifetime that are overly meaningful. Crossing from East to West Berlin pre-1989 would have been quite the experience, I imagine. But even post-Sept. 11, crossing the Canada-U.S. border is for the most part not much more difficult for many Canadians than navigating a Wal-Mart checkout with very grumpy cashiers. So perhaps it was a little much to expect crossing a simple provincial border to be a magic moment. And yet I had anticipated something.

I should elaborate. After meeting at the University of Waterloo, my wife Karin and I had lived in Vancouver for five years. But a few weeks before our daughter Jane was born, we moved to Alberta, Karin's home province. Three months after that, we took advantage of the inherent portability of an infant, and moved back to Ontario, where I'm from originally. Then it was back to British Columbia and then Alberta again. Plus we touched down for visits in six other provinces (we didn't make it to Newfoundland and Labrador or any of the territories). We'd driven everywhere as a family, but Karin and Jane had flown ahead on the last trip, leaving me alone with my thoughts on that long drive west.

As two young parents in no hurry to settle down, it made for a wonderful, refreshingly diverse year. In other ways, however, our peripatetic existence was an absolute nightmare. Karin is an optometrist while I'm a high-school teacher attempting to become a registered architect. All three of these professions have separate legislative bodies in each province requiring you to be licensed in their jurisdiction. My B.C. driver's licence expired after we'd left the province, but before we ultimately decided where to live. Plus there were the ordeals of keeping our health coverage current and trying to register a brand new Canadian. After a year of filing papers, waiting in lines, and pressing "1" for service in English in three different area codes, I had had it. That frustration, combined with the annoyance border crossing, made me realize something: I was tired of the whole concept of provinces.



I know that many Canadians feel very loyal to their respective provinces. For the better part of my life, I felt the same way about Ontario. Now I have no desire to be an Ontarian. Nor do I wish to be an Albertan, a Newfoundlander, or a Quebecer.

What purpose do the provinces serve anyhow, especially now that they've shorn themselves of valuable institutions, cut social services or downloaded them onto the cities, and streamlined their civil services? What's left across Canada is a maddening repetition of paperwork, the provinces all paying bureaucrats to do identical jobs.

So here's what I propose: dissolve the provincial governmental system and free us to roam this country unburdened by a paper trail. The benefits stretch far beyond the obvious savings associated with the immediate firing of all members of provincial legislatures. The legislature buildings would become money-spinners once converted into casinos, hotels and discount retail outlets. All those vehicle registration offices could be consolidated into one central body. Instead of 13 (territories are out as well) different licence plates, we could get a bulk discount on one style of Canadian plate. There would be no more annoying transfer payments from the federal government to the provinces and, more importantly, no more tiresome bickering between the two levels of government. Maps will be cheaper because printing them will require only one colour.

I'm sure some people will not be convinced of the benefits. The backlashes that city amalgamations generated recently in Montreal and in the '90s in Toronto hint at the scope of protest that would likely greet this plan. No doubt, eliminating the provinces will be a bumpy ride.

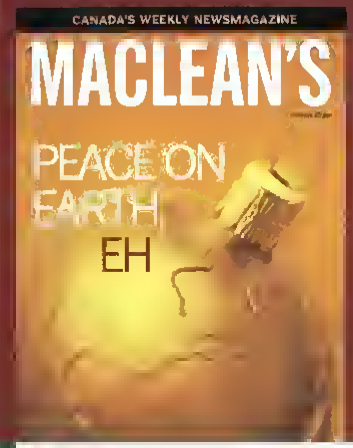
Imagine though, the joy you would feel if you could phone your cousin in New Brunswick at tax time, or your sister in Manitoba when registering a new vehicle, and complain about exactly the same forms. Of course, the provinces will remain symbolically for curling bonspiels and youth hockey tournaments—I do understand some things are sacred. In the end, however, we will truly be what we've always so naively thought we were: Canadian. M

Michael Rourke and his family live in Beaverlodge, Alta.—for now at least. To comment: overtoyou@macleans.ca.

ILLUSTRATION BY BOB HAMLEY

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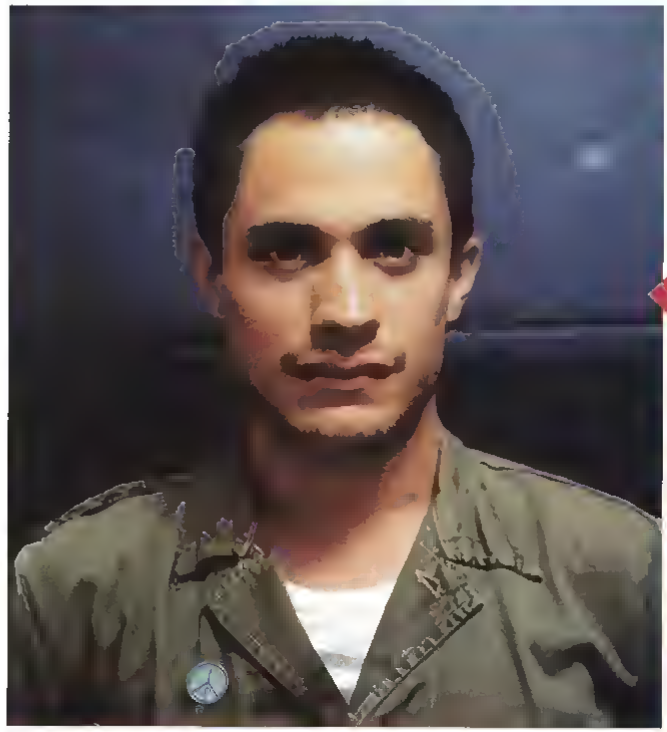
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ROGERS

BACKTALK

John Intini's Sentences 57 | Bestsellers List 57 | Money's Worth 59



Gael García Bernal brings us a younger, gentler Che

The 25-year-old Mexican actor and star of two new films lacks sleep, not talent

Gael García Bernal is devouring a chocolate bar in hopes that it will give him one more burst of energy. But, the Mexican actor (*Y tu mamá también*)—best known in America for going off-script at the Academy Awards last year to denounce the war in Iraq—nearly falls asleep mid-sentence. This time, Bernal, 25, will let his work speak for him. He'll show range playing an actor/transvestite/object of desire in *Bad Education*, a film by **Pedro Almodóvar** (*Talk to Her*) to be released in January. Before that, he'll go for depth portraying a 23-year-old **Ernesto (Che) Guevara** in *The Motorcycle Diaries* (Oct. 1), about a formative road trip Guevara took with a friend in the '50s, before he became a revolutionary. While political and inspiring, *The Motorcycle Diaries* is also funny and true to the spirit of youthful adventure. "That was really nice to discover," says Bernal, "that they were young people. We're so far detached from him. We actually have this perception that important historical figures aren't funny, don't have a sense of humour. That is quite wrong with Che Guevara." SHANDA DEZIEL

> 'It's nice to see a young person grab the bull by the horns, take a stand with the roles he's choosing, and with heart and talent make a difference.'
> —Director Julian Schnabel (*Before Night Falls*)

BUZZ LIST

LOST

This new TV drama—about 48 airplane crash survivors stranded on a deserted island—is one of the best shows of the new season. And full of life lessons, like always make friends with the hot doctor (**Matthew Fox**, *Party of Five*).

GAEL GARCÍA BERNAL
Look for this three-named star come Oscar nomination time.

MAKING THE CUT

It's no *Hockey Night in Canada*, but hey, at least these rink rats want to play.

BEN HEPPNER



Call him *Otello*! The opera singer gets his voice back and wows New York audiences as the "dark Moor."

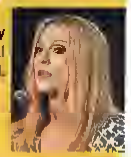
THE SOPRANOS

Tired of Tony's issues? So is Carmela—and she tosses him out in season four, beginning on CTV this week.

ROBERT DOWNEY JR.

The actor is going to release a pop music CD in November—because when you're looking to stay clean and sober there's no better place to be than the music biz.

MADONNA



On her and husband **Guy Ritchie**'s spiritual journey to Israel, the pop star shares some comforting words: "It is no more dangerous to be here than it is to be in New York." And gets herself banned from entering Egypt. Like a Middle East virgin.

PHOTOGRAPH BY REG NA GARCIA, GREGORY BULL/AP; HEIDI LEVINE/AP

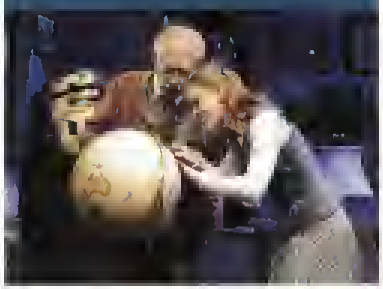
Theatre | When Philly met Saskatchewan

Movies open on thousands of screens all at once, new TV shows debut in millions of living rooms at the same appointed hour, but serious stage plays are often strictly local. A hit in one city might get produced elsewhere the next year, and a really good one can pop up several places over a few seasons. But rarely does a new play generate sufficient buzz to support the wave of productions being lavished on Canadian-born, U.S.-based playwright **Joanna McClelland Glass**'s *Trying*. Glass's two-hander mines a remarkable experience from her own life: as a young woman fresh from Saskatchewan in 1967, she took a job in Washington as secretary to **Judge Francis Biddle**, a towering Democratic figure from a powerful Philadelphia family, who was FDR's attorney general and a judge at Nuremberg. It premiered this spring in Chicago to raves.

Canadian theatre companies took note. A co-production by Ottawa's National Arts Centre English Theatre and Toronto's CanStage opened at the NAC Sept. 16 (starring veteran **Paul Soles** as Biddle, with rising star **Caroline Cave** as the secretary), and will be remounted in Toronto next spring. Other productions include: Victoria's Belfry Theatre in October, Winnipeg's Manitoba Theatre Centre in February and the Vancouver Playhouse in April. An off-Broadway version is scheduled to open Oct. 13. **Marti Maraden**, director of the NAC-CanStage production, says *Trying*'s appeal lies in its border-straddling, generation-spanning tensions. The secretary's idealism runs up against the judge's world-weariness. "It's age contrasted with youth," she says. "Patrician Philadelphia with Prairie populism." America vs. Canada? Nothing so polemical, says Maraden. "She calls him on what his true beliefs are."

JOHN GEDDES

Trying, by playwright McClelland Glass, is coming to a stage near you





DVD | Who's that dude with K.I.T.T.?

Cool cars played a pivotal role 20 years ago on some of TV's top prime-time shows—including *Knight Rider*, *Magnum P.I.* and *The Dukes of Hazzard*. While certain fans were drawn to these '80s classics (all recently released on DVD) by **David Hasselhoff**'s chest hair (above), **Tom Selleck**'s short shorts, or Bo and Luke Duke's tight jeans, many tuned in week after week for the souped-up action stars: a '69 Dodge Charger (*Hazzard*'s General Lee), a '79 Ferrari 308 GTS (*Magnum*'s wheels), and an '83 Pontiac Trans Am (*Knight Rider*'s always chatty K.I.T.T.). This, of course, was a time when a trusty ride was considered a key member of the cast—*The A-Team* had **Mr. T**'s van and *Miami Vice* had **Don Johnson**'s black Ferrari Spider.

Sadly, this proven formula has lost its cachet, as TV's become obsessed with brainy detectives. But how catching criminals with forensic science became more exciting than an old-fashioned, full-throttled car chase, we'll never know.

JOHN INTINI

STEPHEN KING HAS FINISHED *The Dark Tower VII*, the last instalment of his epic series—now totalling 3,872 pages.

George Canyon | Three songs loved by a *Star*

It's time for **George Canyon**—the runner-up in the country music TV contest *Nashville Star* and winner of the rising star award at the 2004 Canadian Country Music Awards—to make good on his titles. This week, the 34-year old releases *One Good Friend*. *Maclean's* asked Canyon, who splits his time between Okotoks, Alta., Nashville, Tenn., and Pictou County, N.S., to name his three favourite songs of all time.

1. ***He Stopped Loving Her Today*** by George Jones. "It's the epitome of a country song and sums up country music from back in the day."
2. ***Love Me*** by Elvis Presley. "And I don't mean *Love Me Tender*. I grew up listening and singing Elvis tunes and this song was also one of my grandmother's favourites."
3. ***In the Garden*** by C. Austin Miles. "It's an old gospel tune that I sang at my dad's funeral—he loved gospel music. And this song has stuck with me since I was a kid."

COURTESY OF UNIVERSAL (TOP); ANDRÉE LANTHIER



PHOTOGRAPH BY K.C. ARMSTRONG

Colin Mochrie finishes John Intini's sentences

On *Whose Line Is It Anyway?*, **Colin Mochrie** is the master of improv, adopting personas at the drop of a hat. But for his new CBC show, *Getting Along Famously* (scheduled to air early next year), Mochrie, 46, will settle into just one character, a variety show host—and his wife, actress **Debra McGrath**, will play the co-host. The Toronto-based actor/comedian finished *Maclean's* Assistant Editor **John Intini**'s sentences.

MY BEST FASHION TIP ... is to always let your wife buy your clothes.

NO MATTER HOW TOUGH THE CROWD, THE ONE JOKE THAT NEVER FAILS ... Is the pulling-down-the-pants gag. It is, and will always be, a classic.

THE LAST TIME I BROKE THE LAW ... was when I jaywalked this morning. I don't believe in the traffic-light system.

THE MOST UNDERRATED FILM OF ALL TIME ... is *Road to Morocco* with **Bob Hope** and **Bing Crosby**. You never forget you're watching a movie because they poke fun at the whole process.

THE TOUGHEST THING ABOUT WORKING WITH MY WIFE ... Is that she keeps me on my diet. We're on the Zone.

I'VE ALWAYS FELT GUILTY FOR ... not learning how to cook earlier. I didn't realize what a great tool it was with women. I didn't even barbecue.

IF I WAS PRIME MINISTER ... I'd institute a holiday celebrating baldness.

FOR MORE "JOHN INTINI'S SENTENCES" VISIT WWW.MACLEANS.CA/PEOPLE

ESSENTIAL MOCHRIE

1. Spent nine years with the Second City comedy troupe in the 1980s.
2. Featured in more than two dozen Bell television ads.
3. Member of *This Hour has 22 Minutes* cast from 2001-2003.
4. Appears this fall on *Drew, Carey's Green Screen*—an improv comedy show.

THIS YEAR'S *MISS AMERICA PAGEANT* attracted a record-low TV audience of 9.8 million—500,000 fewer than last year. In 1995, 25 million tuned in.

Books | Dying to get home at war's end

On July 4 and 5, 1945, troops at the Canadian army's main British base in the market town of Aldershot went on a rampage, smashing over 200 shop windows. The event forms the background to *Aldershot 1945*, a clever mystery by novelist Bruce Allen Powe, 79. At the end of the Second World War the Canadian army processed most of its homeward-bound soldiers through Aldershot. It was a slow process, and resentment grew among soldiers who were also convinced they were being cheated by local merchants. In Powe's version, the base commanding officer is murdered during the riot, leaving Scotland Yard with a tricky international incident complicated by the military habit of closing ranks. A veteran himself, Powe uses his army experiences well to bring to life one of Canada's less glorious wartime episodes.



ALDERSHOT 1945
Bruce Allen Powe, NeWest, $22.95

BestSellers

Fiction

		POSITION LAST WEEK
1.	**THE DA VINCI CODE**, Dan Brown (65)	1
2.	**TRACE**, Patricia Cornwell (2)	5
3.	**BIRDS WITHOUT WINGS**, Louis de Bernières (8)	2
4.	**THE FIVE PEOPLE YOU MEET IN HEAVEN**, Mitch Albom (37)	4
5.	**THE RULE OF FOUR**, Ian Caldwell and Dustin Thomason (14)	3
6.	**THE HATBOX LETTERS**, Beth Powning (3)	9
7	**RUNAWAY**, Alice Munro (1)	
8.	**BEDLAM** Greg Hollingshead (3)	6
9.	**THE COLLECTED STORIES**, Carol Shields (6)	7
10.	**A COMPLICATED KINDNESS**, Miriam Toews (15)	8

Non-fiction

1.	**EATS, SHOOTS AND LEAVES**, Lynne Truss (21)	1
2.	**THE FAMILY** Kitty Kelley (1)	
3.	**THE PAGAN CHRIST** Tom Harpur (25)	3
4.	**DARK AGE AHEAD**, Jane Jacobs (17)	2
5.	**THE EUROPEAN DREAM**, Jeremy Rifkin (2)	4
6.	**HOW SOCCER EXPLAINS THE WORLD**, Franklin Foer (2)	7
7	**SHAKE HANDS WITH THE DEVIL**, Roméo Dallaire (44)	5
8.	**THE MYSTERY OF OLGA CHEKHOVA**, Antony Beevor (1)	
9.	**DRESS YOUR FAMILY IN CORDUROY AND DENIM**, David Sedaris (11)	6
10.	**MY LIFE**, Bill Clinton (11)	8

() Weeks on list
Compiled by Brian Bethune

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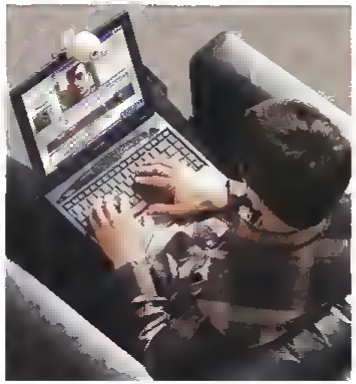
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ROGERS
Your World Right Now

Tech | Beating the mouse by a nose



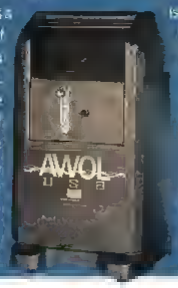
Satellites and Tang aren't the only innovations the space race has brought us. Ottawa scientist Dmitry Gorodnichy's work on the Canadarm project was instrumental in the development of the Nouse—a hands-free alternative to the computer mouse that aims to help people with physical disabilities or pain brought on by excessive computer use.

The nose-steered mouse uses inexpensive webcam technology along with Gorodnichy's software, developed at the Institute for Information Technology, to track the movement of a person's nose, which then controls the cursor on a computer monitor. Blinking emulates left and right button clicks on a traditional mouse and turns the Nouse on and off. The 33-year-old Kiev, Ukraine, native says he began thinking about a solution to the current offering of ineffective keyboard and mouse alternatives while building software tools to help astronauts operate the Canadarm. People with limited upper body mobility are a good fit for the Nouse, but the inventor believes it will have broad appeal, especially among computer users suffering from carpal tunnel syndrome. He says many interested companies have come knocking and hopes that, one day, the Nouse will come standard with new computers. Now, whether you'll actually want to spend your work day wiggling your nose and blinking your eyes is a different story. DEREK CHEZZI

IN CANADA, THE ORGAN DONOR rate held steady at 13 to 15 per million over the last decade, compared to U.S. rates of 18 to 22 per million.

Booze | Barkeep, a round of mist

Want the buzz, but not the taste—or the damage to your waist? Now there's a way to get all the intoxication of alcohol without ever taking a sip. The British-made AWOL (Alcohol Without Liquid) device allows you to inhale a shot of hard liquor in 20 minutes. The machine, which costs US$2,595, turns your drink into a mist by pumping it with oxygen. The 80 proof then goes straight to your lungs, and most of the calories and carbs are avoided. As well, the manufacturers promise that the extra oxygen eliminates hangovers and produces an added sense of "euphoria." Consumers, on the other hand, complain that inhaling drinks is dull, and are balking at the US$10 fee to use the machine, on top of the cost of the shot.



Not surprisingly, fears of faster intoxication have prompted a ban in one part of Australia and a proposed ban in New York. The Canada Safety Council has also expressed concerns, though AWOL is not yet for sale here—where great taste usually wins out over less filling. KARIN MARLEY

Money's Worth | Ring-tone stores

Phone personalization gets loud

Our public places are about to get a lot more annoying. Cellphone ring tones—those shrill versions of the Beatles or TV theme songs that let you know someone's calling—are already a multi-billion industry in Europe and Asia, and the trend is storming North America. More than 1.5 million Canadians have downloaded such music clips in the past 18 months. Teens often update their rings several times a month. Many grab them off file-sharing sites, but ring-tone e-stores are proliferating. All of Canada's major cell-service providers now sell ring tones, as do many phone makers and some artists. There are two types, monophonic (annoyingly beepy) and polyphonic (slightly less so). Soon, the real (rather than synthesized) songs will be available as ring tones. We tested four sites that work with multiple service providers. KARIN MARLEY

VERDICT: Figuring out how to download your first tune can be hugely frustrating. Site and sound quality vary immensely, with monophonic tunes ear-bleedingly piercing, and even polyphonic clips sounding like high-pitched elevator music.

OUR PICK: RingTonesJukebox offers the best selection and sound quality, though downloading was easier to some phones than others.

What's in Store

Name that song: it can ruin a perfectly good day. You walk into a store, hear a tune, then spend hours humming it to people hoping they'll tell you what it is. U.K.-based Shazam Entertainment Ltd. has an answer. Customers can dial a number and record 30 seconds of the music via their cellphones. The service scans its database of 1.6 million songs and within minutes sends a text message identifying the track and artist in Canada by Christmas.



	SHOPMOBILE.MUCHMUSIC.COM	MOBILE.SYMPATICO.CA	WWW.RINGTONEJUKEBOX.COM	WWW.RINGTONESCANADA.CA
COMPATIBILITY	Bell, Fido, Rogers, Telus	Bell, Fido, Telus	Bell, Fido, Rogers	Fido, Rogers
PRICE	$2-$2.50 a ring tone	$2 a ring tone	US$1.99, or 20 for US$19.99	$1.50, or 10 for $8
SELECTION	Mainly teen-oriented fare, with a focus on Top 40 and hip hop. Voice clips from MuchMusic VJs are available if you just can't get enough of Rick the Temp. By Christmas, the site plans to also sell music video clips you can play on your phone.	Clearly geared to boomers—Tom Jones was last week's featured artist. Despite offering numerous categories such as francophone and traditional music as well as voice tones ("Answer, yo" and other phrases), the selection within each was limited.	Massive—categories include funk, Christian, world music, even university fight songs. Also features "real tones," ranging from a barking sea lion to a skidding car crash.	Minimal. The Country category consists of four Shania Twain ditties. Trumpets its Canadianness, but major Canuck artists missing.
EASE OF USE	Despite the assurance that, "like removing a Band Aid" registration process will only hurt for a moment, it actually takes about 15 minutes. But the steps are easy to follow and the ring tone pops up instantly on your phone.	The registration site froze repeatedly. After getting through, buying a tune was easy. Compatible with the fewest phone models.	Purchasing process was dead simple with some phones, but on others retrieving a ring tone was near impossible, for no apparent reason. Make sure to test before you shop. Wide variety of categories, and the sound is much less high pitched than the norm.	No success at all with this site after buying a song, you must download it through the browser on your phone, but the Web page was down each time. Finally kissed our money goodbye. The site is full of typos ("Avril Lavigne," "Christine Aguillera")

TIP: Make sure your phone and service are compatible with the site before you go shopping. Many will send you a free demo ring as a test.

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BERLIN: BOLD AND BROKE

The German city has been rebuilt—and many of the buildings are empty

WHAT'S BERLIN the capital of? Surprise, maybe. In 1991, backpacking through Europe with a rail pass and only half a clue, I picked a major intersection at random from a Berlin transit map and descended into the U-Bahn to find it. Surely here was where the action would be. I climbed from the subway into the middle of a great big open field. For hundreds of yards in every direction there was little to see but weeds and dirt. Like Dorothy in reverse, I had gone looking for Oz and wound up in Kansas. This was Potsdamer Platz in 1991.

A traveller on the same spot 70 years earlier would have had to watch his step because he would have been standing in a booming capital's epicentre, a web of streets so clotted with traffic the Berlin city fathers fell back on high tech to maintain order: they installed the world's first traffic light.



Before very long the Nazis had done their worst and the Allies their best. The sum of their efforts left much of Berlin in rubble. Before it could really recover, in 1961, the Communists put their obscene wall right through Potsdamer Platz, separating cousin from cousin, consecrating Berlin's division in concrete and razor wire. Suddenly the street map made no more sense than anything else did. The centre of Germany's greatest city sank from damage into decay.

Of course it was already on its way back by the time I arrived in 1991. The Berlin Wall had vanished suddenly, like a bad dream. The empty fields at Potsdamer Platz became a prize for businesses and architects competing to put a new face on the reborn city.

By 1995 the city's skyline was a riot of construction cranes. By 1999 metal skeletons were climbing skyward. In 2001, I saw a movie at the Sony Center and didn't realize, until I was leaving, that this dazzling corporate headquarters—with its courtyard capped by a tent roof high overhead—stood at Potsdamer Platz, the once-empty field I'd seen a decade earlier.

These days there's no point trying to guess, as you walk through Berlin, whether you are in what used to be called the West or the East. Change has so rebuilt the city's landmarks that it has become almost impossible for an outsider to tell.

So how's this bold, brand new Berlin doing? I put the question, over lunch by the Spree River, to some Canadians who live in Berlin.

"Broke," one said.

"Bankrupt," his colleague added.

Indeed. For more than 40 years, Berlin, or half of it anyway, was a western enclave in East Germany. Everybody celebrated when it stopped being an enclave. What almost nobody noticed was that it was no longer in the West either. Unemployment is stuck near 18 per cent. East Berlin lost 80 per cent of its manufacturing jobs in the 1990s, which you might have expected. But West Berlin lost 43 per cent, too.

What's most striking is that Berlin is looking emptier. Its population hasn't grown since 1989—partly, it's true, because affluent Berliners are moving into tony suburbs just outside of town, but partly because young Berliners are heading west to find work they can't find here. Which makes Berlin more like a shinier version of East German hard-luck towns like Rostock than like a dream city.

Around Potsdamer Platz I saw forests of newly built luxury condominiums, all quite empty. In the U-Bahn at mid-morning on a weekday, my car held five passengers. The city hauls around a 40-billion euro debt, or $68.8 billion, far bigger than New York City's.

Berlin's population rattles around, sometimes quite agreeably, inside an oversized urban landscape. An immense new railway station is nearing completion. The chancellery building, conceived by Helmut Kohl as the official headquarters of Germany's head of government, is as outsized as the man who built it. The chancellery is five times the size of the White House. Tony Blair's residence, 10 Downing St., could fit in its lobby. Locals call it the Kohlosseum.

"It's become somebody's top-down idea of a great city," Alexandra Richie, the Canadian author of *Faust's Metropolis: A History of Berlin*, told me. "Great cities are never made that way. The government can't turn a city into a capital just by wishing for it."

In 1995 Paul Goldberger wrote an article for the New York Times Magazine about the debate among architects and planners over Berlin's future. The question, he implied, was how to capture the boundless potential of a city where "the prosperity of the West" would "meet the potential of the East" and "music, art and architecture" would "reign supreme." But he had to admit that five years after the Wall came down, "it has not quite happened."

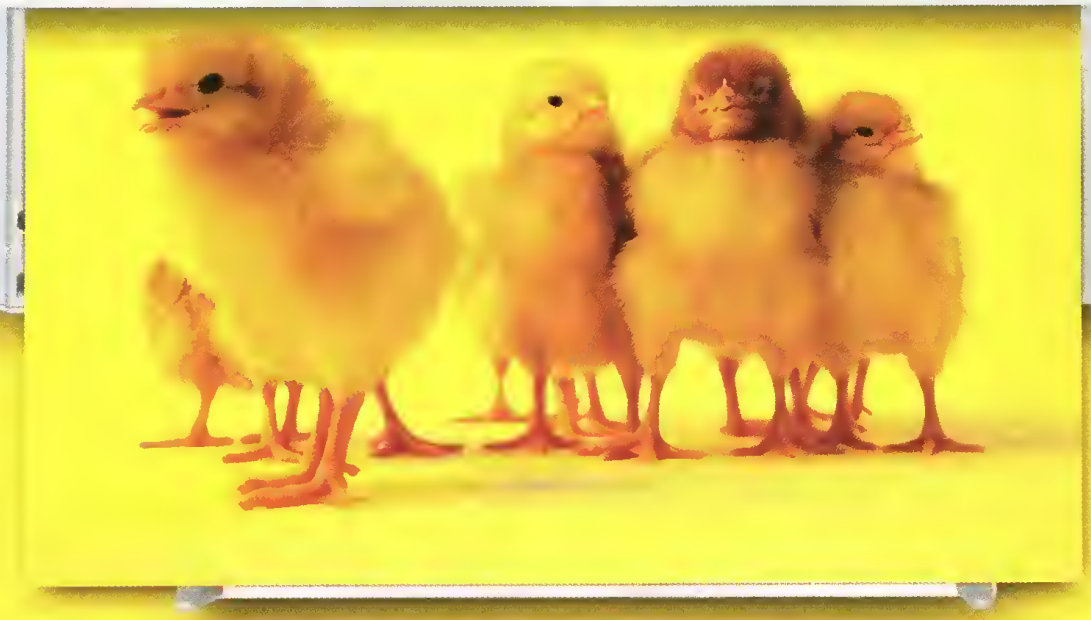
Ten years further along, it still hasn't. Bringing in that forest of construction cranes seemed a tremendously forward-looking gesture. Today's it's looking like an act of nostalgia. Berlin will surprise you that way. M

To comment: backpage@macleans.ca
Read Paul Wells's Weblog, "Inkless Wells," at *www.macleans.ca/paulwells*

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